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ABSTRACT

Integrative and separate approaches to education in social work research are considered in eight papers. In "Education of Human Services Practitioners for Clinical Evaluation," Naomi Gottlieb and Cheryl Richey consider clinical research courses offered in conjunction with practice methods courses at the School of Social Work, University of Washington. In "Experiences in Teaching the Practitioner-Researcher Model," Katherine M. Wood describes the implementation of a graduate social work education model at Rutgers University. In "Increasing the Relevance of Research Education: The University of Hawaii Research Program," Joel Fischer and Walter Hudson describe a research curriculum in which the required research courses involve teaching nomothetic methods to macro student or teaching idiographic methods to direct practice students. In "Toward an Integration of Research and Practice in the Social Work Curriculum: A Description and Evaluation of a One-Quarter Course," Edward J. Mullen, Gerald J. Bostwick, Jr., and Barbra Ryg describe a course offered at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration. The curriculum of the University of South Carolina College of Social Work is addressed by Robert W. Weinbach and John T. Grady in "The Traditional Approach to Social Work Research Education: Avant-Garde or Backward?"; "Social Work Research at Howard University" by Lewis W. Carr; "Testing Incentives to Encourage Research Activities in Newly Graduated Practitioners: A Follow Up Study" by Rosalied A. Kane (University of Utah); and "Program Evaluation Training" by Harris K. Goldstein and James Proctor (Florida State University) are also presented. (SW)

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TEACHING SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH: ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES

Edited By
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Robert Weinbach

Allen Rubin

INTRODUCTION

This is the second of two sourcebooks based on a three-year project on Research Utilization in Social Work Education conducted by the Council on Social Work Education. The first addresses a wide range of issues bearing upon research utilization in both education and practice.1 This volume presents various approaches to education in social work research. A third volume will synthesize the overall work of the project and will present its final recommendations.

Early in the history of the project, it was the consensus of the advisory committee that varying approaches to social work research education should be examined. Several pilot studies were proposed as a means of beginning an assessment of the relative strengths and weaknesses of different educational strategies as they relate to research utilization. At the outset, programs were identified which promised to reflect both social work research education at every level, and wide varieties of educational strategies. Next, a number of key people in the field were asked if they would be interested in preparing detailed descriptions of their programs. Representatives of seventeen faculties submitted abstracts of possible descriptions. With the further refinement of relevant guidelines, at the conclusion of the editorial process, the editors agreed on eight papers, all relating to MSW education, to include in this volume.

The "on the scene" descriptions herein are diverse both in terms of scope and educational strategy. Some describe an entire research curriculum or specialization. Others focus on specific courses or teaching techniques. The educational strategies are of two types: integrative, and separate.

Part I describes the "integrative" approaches, each of which combines research and practice teaching. Three alternative strategies are described in this section. Two papers, one by Gottlieb and Richey, and one by Wood, describe the practitioner-researcher model which combines the teaching of practice and research (production and consumption) within one instructional unit. The Fischer and Hudson paper describes a research curriculum in which the required research courses are "tracked" into two types of sections based on student practice concentrations. One teaches nomothetic methods to macro students; the other teaches idiographic methods to direct practice students. The Mullen paper describes a practice course that utilizes a research component to construct personal models of practice.

Part II presents the "separate" strategies. These teach separate methods courses to prepare students to produce research. In no major way do they combine research and practice instruction. Yet, in some sense each is innovative -- if merely in sailing against the wind and maintaining a relatively high number of research requirements despite national trends toward diminishing those requirements. Two programs that have done just that are described in the papers of Weinbach and Gandy, and Carr. The Goldstein paper describes a specialization in program evaluation in mental health. The Kane paper describes a teaching technique -- encouraging students to write for publication -- that one instructor has found useful in attempting to enhance student learning and attitudes in research.

The split between integrative and separate approaches is by no means clean. Each general type of strategy has elements of the other. The integrative approaches all presuppose some separate research teaching. (To be an effective, discriminating user of research, one must understand research methods, design, and analysis.) The separate approaches all attempt to be practice-relevant. (Research in social work is applied research; it attempts to answer questions associated with improving service delivery and enhancing social welfare.)[2]

These eight views of social work research education share a number of common elements: they are reflective of some -- certainly not all -- innovative approaches; they are not proposed as exemplars of the only right or best ways to do a job. They highlight the field; they are neither a representative sample nor a cross section of social work research education. Juxtaposed as they are, the descriptions suggest that there is no one best way to attain research curriculum objectives; rather, there are many very good ways that can be tried within the guidelines of accreditation. Some have more or less potential for implementation in certain settings than in others. Each approach very likely requires some modification to meet the needs and political factors of individual schools and their communities.

The editors hope that the reader will consider his or her colleagues' accounts with an exploratory mind, selecting and rejecting from among the various suggestions to implement his or her own program...developing additional ideas and curricula that may or may not resemble -- but take into account -- the approaches described in this volume. Simply put, these papers attempt to stimulate thinking about a few of the many possible ways to strengthen education in social work research.

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PART I

INTEGRATIVE APPROACHES

1

EDUCATION OF HUMAN SERVICES PRACTITIONERS FOR CLINICAL EVALUATION

Naomi Gottlieb and Cheryl Richey

The development of clinical research training at the School of Social Work, University of Washington, is based first on the conviction that social workers need to be accountable for the services they offer.[1] An associated rationale is the belief that evaluation of direct services can best be taught as an integral part of practice. This paper focuses on the instruction of graduate students in the purposes of and procedures for the evaluation of direct practice.

Our discussion begins with a history of an educational innovation in the school, and an outline of the structure and functions of the educational context in which research training is offered. The research innovation itself is then presented on two levels: (1) an overview of the clinical research courses offered in conjunction with practice methods courses, and (2) a more detailed description of how the components are integrated in a representative course. Finally, strategies are presented for implementation of this model of research education in the school.

RATIONALE FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH TRAINING

During their first year, all graduate students in the direct services sequence (the human services track) at the school are enrolled in what is termed an Educational Unit (EU), which combines practice methods, clinical research, and practicum experience. Attempts to integrate these three components of graduate training address both an old and a new problem in social work education. The old problem is the traditional gap between education in the practicum and education in the classroom. Social work training has been plagued with the dilemma of how to integrate the two, and students have been left to do the best they could with what may have

seemed to be separate educational experiences. The closer liaison between class and practicum in the Educational Unit (described below) attempts to create a clear parallel in learning. The new problem, of course, is the issue of accountability played out against the background of the series of studies that brought into question the efficacy of clinical social work.[2] Clinical practice evaluation is intended, first of all, to enable social workers to act responsibly to provide effective services to clients. Single-case design, as taught in the Educational Unit, gives students the tools to test efficacy in their cases, one by one, as part of their practice. Further, single-case design responds specifically to a major issue raised in reactions to earlier evaluation studies, that is, the challenge that outcome variables measured in those studies were not clearly related to treatment interventions, and that those variables were defined by people other than the workers themselves. By requiring practitioners to specify both intervention and outcome, and whenever possible with the full participation of the client, the process tends to ensure that there is a logical relationship between intervention and outcome, and that the operational definitions of both are in the hands of those most centrally involved. The definitional process and associated monitoring and measurement procedures are presented to the student as an inherent part of sound clinical practice.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

In itself, the development of this research innovation in the school illustrates that the integration of clinical evaluation with practice is not only desirable but to a great extent inevitable. The first course in clinical evaluation, offered in 1973-1974, focused only on the research process. Students chose the course as one possible way to meet their research requirements, and there was no tie to either a methods course or practicum placement. It soon became clear that evaluation procedures could not be taught separately from treatment issues. Decisions about what interventions to specify and monitor, and what goals to set and measure, were inherently part of methods approaches. Further, students needed a hospitable practicum climate in which to practice evaluation procedures in their ongoing work with clients.

The following year the course was offered again in the format later to be called the Educational Unit -- both practice methods and research were taught in the classroom as an integrated whole, and placements were selected with the practicum instructor's awareness of and participation in integrating research and practice. Finally in 1976-1977, all human services track students enrolled in Educational Units in the second and third quarters of their first graduate year. This model continues to be the curriculum plan.

CURRENT FORMATS FOR INSTRUCTION

At present, several models of the Educational Unit are in operation. Most units (each with 16 students) involve two separate instructors, one for methods and one for research. Depending on the total enrollment of students, there can be from six to ten Educational Units, each reflecting a particular theoretical orientation including psychodynamic, behavioral, and interactional approaches.

The methods and research faculty integrate their respective content segments in several ways. One is through team teaching, where both instructors are actually present and active in all class sessions. The second is by means of parallel teaching, where each instructor teaches a separate course with a clear idea of what the students are learning in the other component, and with attempts to integrate these components within their respective class sessions.

Another model of integration involves the use of one instructor who can teach both the research and methods components, generally one of the newer PhD faculty members who has both clinical experience and research skills. Within this model, the issue of integration is less problematic. Instead, the concern becomes when and how to bring in both components during weekly class sessions.

In addition to the integration of methods and research components, the practicum instructor and the students' field experience are also critical elements of the Educational Unit concept. The methods instructors work with six to twelve agencies whose theoretical approach is similar to their own. Practicum instructors can be involved in the students' learning experience in several ways. Methods and research faculty members usually meet with practicum instructors to explain the meaning of the Educational Unit concept; what students will be learning over the six-month period in terms of theory, intervention techniques, and clinical evaluation strategies; and how these skills might be applied in the agency setting. Through these discussions, attempts are made to keep congruent the timing and content of learning in the two educational contexts. In addition to these initial exchanges, practicum instructors are sometimes included in routine classroom activities such as case presentations and workshops. In turn, faculty members may share new techniques and research findings with agency personnel during staff meetings, or may function as ongoing consultants to practicum instructors and students regarding particular clients.

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH INSTRUCTION

Though training in research components of the various Educational Units may reflect different theoretical orientations, several core themes are shared by all research classes:

1. All instructors stress the need for accountability, and cite the mass of evaluative research as reported in recent professional literature. Emphasis is placed on the need for practice evaluation, and on the suggestion that single-case design permits practitioners to incorporate tests for effectiveness in their own practice, regardless of whether agencywide evaluations are conducted. Each instructor stresses how case evaluation enhances practice.

2. Each course considers group designs, often by a critical review of recent studies in social work. Sometimes students conduct limited group research, as well as single-case designs. Methodological issues that differentiate these two clinical research options are presented, and the student is acquainted with the advantages and disadvantages of each.

3. The rationale and procedures for single-case studies are presented in each course, and the various designs are considered, AB, reversal, and multiple-baseline. Instructors vary in the extent to which they draw on behavioral literature, but all acknowledge that single-case methodology developed within a behavioral context.

4. Research instructors for units with other than behavioral orientations stress the need to adapt and modify evaluation procedures to accomodate other theoretical approaches. However, all EU instructors stress the importance of specification of problems, interventions, and outcomes. Such specification does not require a behavioral approach. Students learn that feelings and attitudes, even the nature of the relationship between client and worker, can be specified and changed in these measures. Client problems such as low self-esteem and depression can be specified, and alterations in these feelings and attitudes targeted as treatment goals. For example, one indication of low self-esteem would be the client's self-derogatory statements in the interview. The client and worker can specify decreases in such statements as a treatment goal and these can be measured.

Procedures for and value of the client's participation in this specification are stressed, a clear indication to the student that evaluation is integral to and enhances practice. Several psychodynamic-methods instructors have commented that students' training in such specifying procedures increases their diagnostic skills and appears to lead to more expeditious treatment planning.

5. All research instructors provide training in specifying objectives and outcomes, frequently including exercises in differentiating observation from inference. Students learn how attitudes, feelings, and behaviors, when specified, can be measured and in turn become part of a clear agreed-upon contract with clients about treatment objectives. Treatment plans are frequently phrased in hypothesis form, helping students to see that all practice is inherently testing out the use of possibly effective interventions, and that the research modality calls for the operational definitions of the variables involved so that such testing can be more systematic. Students are trained in measurement procedures, in how to collect

various forms of data, how to involve both clients and collateral persons in data collection, and how to present and interpret data. Some instructors also introduce procedures for statistical inference as applicable to single-case design.

6. All instructors spend time emphasizing the feasibility issue in clinical research. There is general recognition that an ideal single-subject design is rarely possible, and that the realities of both client situations and agency constraints call for design compromises. Students are faced with any number of real obstacles: clients who pass from crisis to crisis, or who for other reasons cannot be engaged in setting goals or collecting outcome data; data collection procedures of questionable reliability and validity; and factors in the client's situation which preclude any more than a simple AB design. Much time is devoted to issues of feasibility, to the importance of placing primary emphasis on client needs, and to the possibility and value of staying with at least some of the design requirements. Instructors stress that notwithstanding the drawbacks in application, single-case design pushes the practitioner toward greater specificity and mutual goal-setting with clients. This in itself is stressed as benefiting practice.

7. The requirements for each course include preparation of a report on single-case design methodology application to current work with a client or client group in the practicum. This client change project must be in publishable form, complete with review of appropriate literature about the client problem and/or intervention utilized, description of the design with explanation about necessary compromises, clarity in the discussion of procedures to allow for replication, and elaboration of conclusions drawn in light of design compromises. In class sessions, students present their case projects, with methods and practicum instructors present, often with other students as discussants, and with a consultative atmosphere in the classroom.

INTEGRATION OF THE COMPONENTS

To illustrate specifically how the methods, research, and practicum components can be integrated, one example of a behaviorally oriented Educational Unit combining separate methods and research instructors in a parallel teaching model will be presented. The methods instructor meets three hours a week with students to discuss and practice assessment and intervention procedures; the research instructor holds weekly two-hour sessions. Both instructors meet together with students for a weekly two-hour laboratory session in which cases from students' practica are presented, and the logistics of integrating practice and evaluation activities are discussed. These sessions allow for the identification and solution of problems in applying clinical evaluation procedures with clients.

In addition to the laboratory sessions, client change projects due

each quarter also assist students in integrating classroom methods and research procedures with their practicum experience. In the EU described here, one client change report per quarter satisfies the major course requirements for both the methods and research components. In the first-quarter sequence, students are required to conduct an AB design with a client, utilizing primarily pre- to post- measures. For example, indicators of client depression (mood scales, daily activity rates) are taken before intervention, throughout treatment, and at the end of intervention to document extent and pattern of change. In the second quarter, students are required to implement a more sophisticated design with their case which demonstrates not only client change, but also a causal link between intervention and outcome, such as a reversal, changing criterion, construction, or multiple-baseline design. For instance, the intervention technique of contracting for mutually agreed upon changes among family members is systematically applied to multiple behaviors sequentially, and subsequent changes are noted in each behavior -- completion of chores, active listening when mom talks, keeping phone time to ten minutes per call. In preparing and presenting their case projects, students are asked to include the following:

1. A critical review of at least seven articles in the literature pertinent to their client's problem (depression) and/or their selected measurement and intervention procedures.

2. A description of the presenting problem, and the rationale for its selection. For example, defining a client's "depression" in specific terms, and discussing why this problem was chosen over other potential concerns such as overweight or parent-child conflict.

3. Baseline data presented in written and graph form, such as average daily mood ratings for the depressed client, or frequency of social contacts for the shy client.

4. A behavioral analysis of the antecedent and maintaining conditions associated with the client's presenting concern. What conditions or situations precede and trigger depressive episodes? What happens during and after social exchanges that may be associated with continued avoidance of such interactions by the shy client?

5. The intermediate and terminal treatment objectives. Getting up one hour earlier and thus spending less time sleeping may be the first goal with a depressed person. Additional goals might include increasing percent of completed tasks per day, and decreasing frequency and intensity of self-critical thoughts.

6. The intervention plan and the rationale for choosing a particular strategy. For example, in helping a depressed client increase her or his activity level, a graded tasks assignment procedure might be seen as more directly applicable than a cognitive restructuring technique that would assist the client in reducing excessive performance expectations.

7. Implementation of the intervention plan, including written and graphed presentation of results. This includes a discussion of how treatment progressed, any changes in intervention strategy, and the rationale for such changes.

8. A plan for enhancing the maintenance of change after treatment termination; for example, assisting the client in developing skills for coping with future situations that have resulted in depression (developing a support network and coping statement).

9. Discussion of the strengths and weakness of the procedure, including alternative explanations for the observed outcome. Did other changes in the client's life affect her or his mood in addition to or despite the intervention utilized?

Although the client change project and the laboratory sessions are both designed to facilitate integration, many instructors and students feel that laboratory discussions in particular are critical in helping students integrate all three EU components in a practical and meaningful way.

Issues typically presented in the laboratory can be categorized into several areas. One major topic is pretreatment measurement procedures including questions about: (1) how to involve clients in data collection, (2) how to explain to clients the necessity of generating baseline information before intervention can proceed, (3) what should be measured with a multiproblem client, and (4) what measurement techniques and instruments are most appropriate and manageable for particular clients within certain settings.

Another major laboratory discussion area is the students' ability to integrate clinical research methods with existing practicum procedures. For example, an agency may utilize traditional psychiatric diagnostic labels which are difficult to translate into measurable indicators. In the laboratory, students discuss how the diagnosis of a particular client, for example, "obsessive-compulsive reaction," might be specified into more behavioral terms (What did the client do which resulted in this label? Can staff cite examples of the client's "obsessive-compulsive" behavior?) Or, an agency may serve clients in crises primarily, thus emphasizing relatively short-term client contact which makes adequate pretreatment assessment difficult. In these situations, students are encouraged to utilize case records, simple one-point baselines, or pretreatment estimates based on self-report as indicators of client functioning before intervention.

Multidisciplinary settings in which social work students are members of a team pose special difficulties in terms of who will collect data and when, and who is the principal person responsible for treatment planning, intervention, and evaluation. Students have learned to deal with this situation by: (1) building a client's program into the team's ongoing activities, (2) simplifying recording and intervention procedures so they

do not interfere with routine activities, (3) training other staff members to implement a client's program, and (4) using records routinely kept by staff as main client change measures (number of "timeouts" in a residential treatment facility, number of times a hospitalized patient has completed a meal or joined a group discussion).

A third issue for consideration in laboratory sessions is handling the many unforeseen and uncontrollable variables that exist when working with clients. For example, a client selected for the change project may decide to switch problem priorities after baseline data for one problem area have already been collected; or a client gets a new job and misses several appointments; or a client's mood and behavior improves dramatically because she or he left a bad relationship, which may have little to do with the focus of intervention. In these cases, students struggle with compromising an evaluation model with clients' treatment needs so they can remain flexible and sensitive to client concerns while also applying reasonably rigorous clinical research standards.

Despite the problems in implementing sound clinical evaluation procedures in social services agencies, practicum and classroom instructors report that students exhibit a set of skills related to evaluation. Students show that they can: (1) specify and measure client concerns, (2) integrate evaluation activities with other clinical and agency duties, (3) discuss with clients and other agency staff the importance and mechanics of monitoring outcome, (4) modify evaluation procedures in creative ways to accommodate the unpredictable, and (5) perhaps most important, put their own work with clients to the test, even though unsuccessful treatment outcomes may be uncovered.

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Over the last few years, the school has developed a strong commitment to the Educational Unit model of packaging curriculum to enhance integration of key components. The degree of faculty support for the premise that clinical practice should and can be evaluated is to some extent surprising, given the size and diversity of both the clinical methods and the research faculty, and the relatively short existence of the EU concept as a schoolwide phenomenon. Even during the expansion of the clinical evaluation model in 1975 and 1976, many methods instructors were still unsure about the importance or necessity of requiring all human services students to take a companion clinical research course. However, in 1977 the human services faculty decided that all direct service students would be required to take an Educational Unit. The EU has become an institutionalized curriculum reality which is supported by faculty from many theoretical and practice backgrounds. We found several reasons for this acceptance, and these may constitute suggestions for other schools of social work considering experimentation with the EU concept.

Perhaps the most compelling reason for the acceptance of the EU was

the positive reactions from the first group of students who participated in all three components in 1976. As reported elsewhere,[3] students having either a behavioral or a psychodynamic orientation who enrolled in EUs with companion research courses, tended to evaluate their overall experience with the methods component as more positive than students who did not enroll in a comparison research course. Students who were exposed to clinical research procedures indicated being more prepared to work with clients, more likely to continue utilizing the methods they had learned, and were generally more positive toward their educational experience. These results were presented to human services faculty, many of whom were clinical methods instructors. Instead of the research classes detracting from or diminishing the methods content, it was apparent that they tended to enhance student learning in terms of clinical skills.

A second reason for the acceptance of the EU model was the positive reactions from practicum instructors who appreciated the close working relationship with classroom instructors, and the increased skill level of students in terms of assessment and evaluation activities.

The alliances that developed among various methods and research instructors, in addition to those that arose among the methods faculty who spent many hours developing procedures for EU student enrollment and practicum placements, had many positive ramifications in a large and diverse faculty. Stereotypes of the "touchy-feely" clinician who felt practice was an art, and of the hardhearted researcher who could not be bothered with anything not quantifiable, began breaking down through mutual hard work in training students to be skillful and sensitive clinicians who were also accountable. Similarly, discussions among methods instructors from different theoretical orientations occurred more routinely, and an atmosphere of sharing and mutual respect developed. An important aspect of these discussions was the involvement of high-ranking established nonbehavioral faculty members who emphasized the importance of <u>outcome</u> as well as the <u>process</u> of treatment. These individuals were instrumental in bridging gaps between the newer, more behavioral faculty, and the more established faculty with psychodynamic orientations.

The preceding discussion has highlighted several strategies that could be utilized to foster curriculum innovations involving course packaging. These have included obtaining student and practicum instructor reactions to innovations, and encouraging faculty discussion and collaboration, especially among high-ranking and influential members. Certainly the history of a school and the makeup of its faculty will dictate how and when such innovations might be attempted. At the University of Washington, the EU curriculum was developed in a step-by-step manner, though without a clear "master plan" present from the beginning. Other schools, where the process has not begun, might benefit from the efforts of a few faculty representatives modifying content in specific courses. For example, the methods instructor could easily incorporate the issues of specification, measurement, and development of operational goals into discussion of assessment. Students could be encouraged to evaluate treatment of one client in their

practicum within the framework of the methods course. A research instructor could include more clinical examples of attempts to evaluate practice through single-subject and group designs. Students could practice developing appropriate dependent measures with client examples presented in class. A practicum instructor who evaluates treatment could be invited into the classroom to illustrate the application of research strategies in a clinical setting.

CONCLUSIONS

The positive tone of this report accurately reflects the essential stance of the University of Washington School of Social Work faculty toward the introduction and use of the Educational Unit as a curriculum concept, a fact not meant to obscure unresolved problems. Some of these have been mentioned; for example, the difficulties students experience in applying evaluative methods to volatile client situations or in complex organizational settings. Other problems include inherent unevenness and additional work required when two instructors try to articulate course content and instructional styles. A research methodology developed within a behavioral orientation is also far more problematic when applied in a psychodynamic or interactional context. Both faculty and students struggle with ways of specifying and measuring interventions and outcomes when these are conceived of in nonspecific or nonobservable terms.

Perhaps the most important aspect of our present stage of development is that, notwithstanding these and other real and important difficulties, the faculty have agreed to continue to work on the problems so that the present model, viewed as necessary and valuable, can be further refined.

2

EXPERIENCES IN TEACHING THE PRACTITIONER-RESEARCHER MODEL

Katherine M. Wood

Accountability -- demonstration of our effectiveness -- has most frequently been given as the rationale for the movement in social work education toward the training of "practitioner-researchers," or, in Briar's term, "clinical scientists."[1] Less frequently mentioned is another rationale at least as important as that of accountability: the need to develop the empirical base for social work practice theory.

To refer to "practice theory"[2] is almost a misnomer since when compared to a strict definition of the term "theory,"[3] that which underlies casework and group work practice is no more than an aggregate of untested, unverified, and sometimes contradictory practice wisdom propositions, prescriptions and proscriptions. Twenty years ago Kadushin observed that:

> Although the literature which details what the social worker needs to know, to do, and to feel is almost embarrassingly rich, nevertheless the component of the knowledge base of social work which derives from social work presents some disturbing characteristics. The borderline between social work hypothesis and fact is often tenuous. A seemingly truthful self-evident hypothesis achieves the status of a fact by sheer repetition. Yet the history of science is strewn with the debris of self-evident propositions.[4]

The first of Greenwood's famous five attributes of a profession was the possession of "a system of theoretical knowledge which serves as the basis for the profession skill."[5] In 1954, Kahn[6] warned that failure to develop a sound knowledge base <u>of its own</u> would relegate social work to technician status. The dictionary defines "knowledge" as "clear and certain perception of fact or truth."[7] The practice wisdom on which most of direct practice is based, by contrast, is a collection of largely

empirically untested hypotheses that are sometimes misperceived as "fact" or "truth." Every profession utilizes some degree of practice wisdom in its knowledge base, but the balance between practice wisdom and empirical knowledge is one criterion of a profession.

WHY TEACH THE PRACTITIONER-RESEARCHER MODEL?

Direct practice theory presently resembles a string of mismatched beads: a proposition, a concept, a technique, a practice principle -- often borrowed unselectively and uncritically from other fields -- strung together loosely, with little apparent sense of order or congruence, and with contradictions happily co-existing side by side. Professionalization requires that we better define and validate that theory. Practitioners cannot avoid this responsibility by claiming that they are waiting for a separate group called "social work theorists" or "social work researchers" to do it for them. In the past, when researchers have evaluated practice, poor outcome results[8] were, in many instances, traceable to the fact that the interventive variable -- casework or group work -- could not even be defined, let alone controlled and measured. Unless the independent variable can be controlled and measured, there is no possibility of an experimental design, and the practitioner is in the best position to operationalize key variables.

A major rationale for the development and teaching of a practitioner-researcher model is that it shows some promise of turning out practitioners with the requisite skills to analyze critically the differences among practice wisdom, doctrine and cultism, and practice theory; and the skills to enable them to take responsibility for development and empirical validation of the knowledge base for their own social work practice. This is too crucial and too overdue a task to be left to academic theoreticians, many of whom have not seen a social work client in years, or to researchers, many of whom have never themselves worked directly with a social work client. The laboratory of current social work practice is necessary in order to test out theory for that practice.

ATTEMPTS AT TEACHING A PRACTITIONER-RESEARCHER MODEL

Relating some of our experiences in struggling to implement a practitioner-researcher model in one graduate social work program may be of help to other schools and agencies interested in attempting to accomplish this objective. Following is a description of five separate ways, developed incrementally, in which practice and research integration, or lack of integration, has been realized in the graduate program at Rutgers. Some of our successes and failures will be detailed, as well as our conjectures about the reasons for success or failure.

At the Outset

The first educational pattern, a traditional model of separate research classes, practice classes, and field experience, continues to be the curriculum plan for many of our direct practice students. We have no reason to believe that the results of this educational experience are any different for our graduates than they are for graduates of similar programs: that is, following "escape" via graduation from often negatively-perceived research requirements, the fledgling MSW never engages in research, actively avoids reading about it in the literature, and does not look to research for help with a practice diagnostic or intervention problem.[9] A major reason for this development may be that, since research and practice faculty perceive themselves as inherently different and believe that they teach different sets of skills, the student "hears" this implicit message and logically concludes that research seems to have little to do with practice. Certainly it is hard for the student to perceive the immediate relevance and utility of the nomothetic research he is being taught to his practice with individuals, families, and groups. Practice faculty tell students that research is "good" and is needed to build a scientifically based practice, but students usually do not see this statement in action, nor do they see practice and research faculty themselves achieving the synthesis or integration of research principles and methodology, practice theory, and actual practice that students are expected to accomplish for themselves unaided. Practice faculty who continue to be involved in practice activities may use illustrations in their teaching from their own current practice experiences, but students observe that objective study of the interventive technology, measurement of case outcome, utilization of relevant descriptive or prescriptive research findings, or any other kind of research-oriented practice approach is not characteristic of their professors' practice. Students also observe either that research instructors have never engaged in direct practice themselves, or that they are attached to research paradigms that appear to the student to be irrelevant to his direct practice responsibility.

The Second Variation

The second approach to teaching and practice, requirement of a nomothetic field research project, appears not to yield much better results. For the more analytically-minded student, it can be an exciting experience; some have been known to wonder whether they have made a mistake by majoring in direct practice or by going into social work at all. For most students, however, the required field project is just a requirement to be met, and the relevance to their personal career goals of becoming skilled direct practitioners does not become apparent. The students are aware that they will probably never become involved in such research again once they complete their degree requirements. The basic research teaching "pitch" -- that of the use of scientific method to inform and improve practitioners' and agencies' practice, is usually lost on the students.

A Third Plan

With the third approach, we experienced some improvement. The author worked with the Research Sequence Chairperson and a doctoral student teaching assistant[10] to develop a second semester research course focused on developing direct practice students' research-consumer skills. The format consisted of students first articulating in their research class a particular practice problem they were experiencing in their field practicum, for example, how to handle a particular client problem such as the cause of the client's resistance and how to respond effectively to it. Next, work teams of approximately three students each were formed to explore research literature from social work, from other helping disciplines, and from the social and behavioral sciences, for findings that might suggest a solution to the problem. Each student in the class had the opportunity both to pose a practice problem for the class and to serve on the study group for another students's practice problem. Study groups then reported to the class on seemingly relevant results of their literature search as they applied to an individual student's practice problem. The class, and the student involved with the case, discussed the relevance of the findings and how the student involved might implement them with the actual case. In a sense, this was a "quick and dirty" application of the research and development approach advocated by Rothman in community organization.[11]

The students found this approach exciting, relevant, and immediately applicable to their needs and to their concern with learning effective practice. (It should be noted that the doctoral student teaching the course had had appreciable practice experience before entering the doctoral program.) Students' anonymous evaluations of the course gave it higher marks than those usually achieved by the traditional second semester research courses.

Something was still missing. This approach focused on development of research-consumer skills in direct practice students; it did not address development of research-producer skills nor teach students how to apply the tools (not just the findings) of research in their own practice. Field work was not involved except indirectly as students fed back to field agencies their learnings about research findings relevant to the student's/agency's case.

A Further Refinement

In the fourth approach, the author worked with another doctoral student teaching assistant[12] to develop yet another format. An attempt was made to integrate the teaching of practice and research. The fact that we chose the format of separate -- albeit collaborative and parallel -- courses indicates that we (the faculty involved) had not yet completely resolved the spurious practice-research dichotomy that has plagued the field for so long. The decision was also reflective of practical problems involved in our school's course structure (separate practice method and research courses are required

of all students), and in the organization's "turf" problems.

At the time, the author (the practice instructor) was concerned that she would not be able to teach within the time frame available both research methodology as it applied to practice, and practice principles themselves. We feel that, although concern is valid about how much can be taught effectively within a semester time frame, we were still caught up in seeing the two areas as separate and therefore likely to conflict with or detract from each other. Further, at that time, our graduate program did not start students in method or field work until the second semester; therefore, this course was the students' introduction to practice. Students were extremely anxious about what to say to the client with whom they had an interview scheduled early in their field work experience, and were not yet ready for a practice teaching approach that focused on other than very elementary interviewing skills such as how to communicate warmth, empathy and genuineness. Students rapidly moved beyond this phase, however; and it became apparent to the practice instructor that had the two disciplines been more closely integrated once they were beyond their initial period of self-consciousness and anxiety, she could have helped them move to an appreciation for using research thinking and skills in the practice process. For the reasons expressed above, however, we set up Research II and Direct Practice I as collaborative and parallel, not integrated, courses.

The mutual objectives of the courses were to demonstrate to students the relevance and utility of research for practice by providing an actual opportunity to use research skills in the practice process; to teach students how to utilize the methods of scientific inquiry in their conduct of practice; and to develop a sense of responsibility and competence in students for sharing in the development, testing, and validation of an empirical base for practice.

The practice course began from a perspective that practice is one kind of research, and that the stages the practitioner uses in conceptualizing a case are identical with the conceptual stages of the research process. At the minimum, the practitioner utilizes an "A-B" research design in every case, always asking himself or herself, "What do I need to do , and how do I need to use myself to help this client and problem situation move from the present point 'A' to point 'B' of problem resolution or amelioration?"

Students explored the similarity of the research processes they had learned the previous term in the required Research I course to the conceptual practice processes of:

Problem formulation or definition in highly specific and measurable terms;

Problem analysis ("diagnosis" or "psychosocial assessment") in light of present descriptive theory, meaning the formulation of diagnostic hypotheses -- what variables within the person(s), in their interpersonal group systems, and in their social situations, appeared

to be creating, exacerbating, or perpetuating the problem? What individual, interpersonal or social variables or factors existed as positives in the situation?

Definition of the dependent variable, or outcome, in specific, measurable, and operational terms: specifically, what changes was the student hoping to accomplish in which of the above variables? What was the student's rationale for projecting these goals in light of such factors as his skill level, organizational resources and constraints of the agency, and time?

Congruence of the student practitioner's and the client's goals; what process of contracting was engaged in and with what results?

Formulation of interventive hypotheses, and definition of the independent variable -- the intervention -- again in highly specific, measurable, and operational terms;

Application and monitoring of the independent variable;

Collection and analysis of data;

Evaluation of outcome: changes in the dependent variable according to the change goals that had been contracted;

Drawing of inferential conclusions that were supported by the data.

It soon became apparent to students that they were thinking like researchers, while acting like compassionate helpers; and that the one facet of their role complemented rather than eclipsed the other. We were asking that they be more specific and rigorous in the way they thought and planned concerning their cases; and we were attempting to supply them with the tools necessary for this kind of planning.

In both classes there was early emphasis on the process of definition, involving skill in observation. Students were coached in learning the differences among and the usage of observation, fact and inference, and in translating those observations, the facts known about the case, and their inferences into operational definitions. Many of the students had learned "psychologese," or were learning it in their agencies, or assumed that it was expected at the graduate level. A difficult but important learning process in both classes consisted of students' translating an inferential diagnostic term such as a reference to the client's "flattened affect" into specific, measurable and operational terms and, in the process, sorting out observation from inference in the construction of this judgment.

Some students who were familiar with the behavioral intervention literature assumed that we would be teaching only a behavioral approach. They discovered, however, that both the practice and research processes being

described were theory-free. A student might opt for "supportive casework" as the primary intervention -- but she or he then had to go on and define specifically and operationally what was meant by this, for example: support what? how should the worker behave when she or he is being "supportive?"

The definition of a treatment strategy as an interventive hypothesis appeared to help students begin to see themselves as participating in the testing and validating of practice principles and propositions. It also helped to move them away from an emotional attachment to a particular theory of helping or set of interventive techniques. They began to recognize that, in practice, there is little to draw upon that is empirically validated, and that the prescriptions for practice of most theories are, in actuality, hypotheses to be explored and tested. The more "anti-behavioral" students began to develop new respect for that approach as they recognized that behavioral interventions have more of an empirical base than other theories of helping. On the other hand, students with a "pro-behavioral" stance began to appreciate that behavioral methods are not a panacea and are not applicable to every client and problem. In general, students began to realize that in order to become skilled and effective practitioners, their knowledge base and their practice itself must be pluralistic; and that accomplishing this kind of learning in depth would take years beyond the completion of their academic training.

As its major focus, the research course taught single-subject research technology applied to students' cases. Borrowing from the earlier experimental research course, appreciable emphasis was also placed on the search of research literature relevant to their practice cases, and on assessing findings in light of the adequacy of the research design and procedures employed. Students were now seeing themselves as researchers as well as practitioners, and were struggling to think like researchers while dealing with their cases. They seemed to us better able than the usual Research II student to analyze critically whether a given research study had followed the research-practice canons that students were learning intellectually and experientially.

A joint assignment was made for both classes, a written paper due in two stages. The first stage was a preliminary case assessment and outline of the design the student had chosen to measure case progress. In small groups, and with the aid of the research instructor, students critiqued and helped each other to revise these preliminary drafts for the research design. The final paper, dealing with the same case, provided the opportunity to revise the case assessment and research design if necessary, to analyze the effectiveness of the intervention, and to report on the measured outcome. In the final paper, students were also required to incorporate material from published research relevant to their cases, and to demonstrate how and why it had (or had not) been utilized in their practice.

A deficiency of the course arrangement was that field instructors could have been more integrally involved. A series of meetings was held with agency instructors to share what we were doing, to teach a skeletal

structure of single-subject design, and to enlist their cooperation. The last objective was realized when, with one exception, field instructors supported the students' efforts. A better arrangement might have been for field instructors to receive more formal training in use of the research methodology, so that not only could they support students' learning; they might also participate in it more actively.

The only measure of the effectiveness of the combined course experiment was the evaluations completed by students on routinely-administered anonymous questionnaires. Students' evaluations were extremely positive: they assigned evaluation "scores" higher than the mean evaluation score for all courses in the school, and higher than those usually given to regular Research II courses. We were particularly impressed by this fact since a negative Hawthorne effect seemed to be in operation. Contrary to usual school process and culture which allows a marked degree of student choice and autonomy, students had no choice about being registered for these particular practice and research courses, since all students in the author's group of field agencies were required to take both courses. Students were initially resentful about what they saw as an infringement on their autonomy, and were less than enthusiastic about the practice tie-in with research. They changed their minds during the course of the experiment, however. We have no hard data concerning the frequency and number of students who continued to use the approach to practice and research that was taught, or whether they continued to look to research literature for help with case problems. Since this group had recently graduated at the time of this writing, we considered doing a follow-up study with them at a later time, comparing them to a similar group who received the traditional practice and research instruction.

Combining Research and Practice

The fifth approach to teaching a practitioner-researcher model was on the drawing board as this article was written. One of the most important observations of both instructors in the parallel course arrangement just described was that, although we had planned to stick primarily to our own content areas, each of us was often unsure whether we were teaching practice or research. What had happened, of course, was that practice and research had become so intertwined that they were conceptually inseparable. We now plan to combine practice and research. Two separate courses must still appear "on the books," since students are required to have credit in each; but the two courses will be taught by one instructor and scheduled back-to-back so that the students' experience will be of one, double-length, and integrated course. In effect, we will attempt to teach practice as one kind of research process. A number of other faculty with both practice and research knowledge and experience have become interested, and the experiment with this fifth approach will probably be replicated, concurrently or sequentially. (It is, of course, essential that the instructor know practice as well as research.) We plan to build into this latest attempt at integration a more "hard-nosed" evaluation procedure concerning the immediate and longer-range effects on students' knowledge, skills, attitudes,

and utilization of research in practice. We also plan on better integration with the student's field practice experience.

We may well go on to develop and test sixth and seventh approaches. We have learned from experience, and are much more certain about what we are trying to do and why.

We have come to consider the term "research," only semi-facetiously, as a dirty word -- because in the students' minds it often carries negative connotations of statistics and tables; and because it tends to be defined according to a particular research design paradigm, usually one of the nomothetic group. To "research" something means to "attempt to know" in as objective, reliable, and valid a way as possible. "Research" does not mean gathering data, as is often assumed: it means formulating a problem, defining hypotheses, and the like -- then gathering data for a specific purpose. The purpose relates to the particular question being asked. For some questions, idiographic approaches are the most applicable; for others, nomothetic designs make more sense. The concepts of "proficiency" and "familiarity," developed by our new health care concentration,[13] were found useful in thinking about learning objectives for students interested in micro-practice and those who will work in community organization, policy and planning, or administration. For the direct practice student, proficiency in research techniques applicable to the individual case, and familiarity with other research paradigms might be the objective. The reverse may be appropriate for the student in macro-practice.

IN CONCLUSION

We have now come full-circle to the fundamental issue: why teach and integrate research with practice -- toward what end? What kind of practitioner do we want to turn out? At present we are answering these basic questions in terms of the following objectives:

To help social work direct practice to develop and utilize scientific methods and the tools of science in practice.

To develop the empirical base of direct practice by teaching the practitioner himself the necessary skills to engage in this crucial task.

To make specifiable, and thus more transferable and teachable, effective helping processes and techniques. What does a "good" worker do that makes him or her "good?" In what circumstances, under what conditions, with what clients and problems?

To develop, test, and validate innovations in interventive technology. Social work is moving into new practice areas, industry as but one example. Scientific methods should be used to test the applicability of old interventions for the clients we already serve

and in these new areas, and to develop and test new practice technology.

To provide a mechanism for learning from our mistakes by increased ability to specify and measure the interventive technology being applied. Few social agencies have such devices as the "Tissue Committee" or "Mortality Committee" that exists in medicine. The evidence of possible deterioration effects in practice makes this an ethical imperative.

We do not claim to have achieved these global and long-range objectives. We know we have made a beginning.

3

INCREASING THE RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH EDUCATION: THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII RESEARCH PROGRAM

Joel Fischer and Walter Hudson

There is substantial evidence that research training of graduate social work students has been less than successful. Research courses often are viewed by the students as the least helpful courses in the curriculum.[1] After graduation, few practitioners either conduct research[2] or read, consult, utilize, or share research findings, especially when faced with difficult practice situations.[3] And even when they do read research, it appears that social workers' judgments of the quality of the research and its implications for practice are strongly influenced by whether or not the findings support their own biases.[4]

In response to this reaction to the place of research in practice, social work education as an institution seems to have shrugged its shoulders and given up. Over the past several years the proportion of the graduate curriculum devoted to research has been reduced, and many schools of social work have dropped any requirement for students to complete a research project in order to graduate.[5] This trend persists despite the fact that the Council on Social Work Education in its accreditation standards recognizes the importance of research as a critical component of the curriculum,[6] and despite indications of increasing need for mastering a variety of research skills in order to utilize practice methodologies found to be effective.[7]

ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this paper is to develop some hypotheses regarding the nature of the problems confronting both training and utilization of research in the practice of social work, and to present a proposal, already implemented at one school of social work, for dealing with some of the instructional dynamics.

Numerous explanations have been offered regarding the present state of the art of education in social work research.[8] Since the problems besetting the field appear to be institutional in nature, affecting social work education and practice nationwide, we can reasonably rule out explanations that affect only one or two schools or limited geographic regions, for example, poor teachers in one locale, or negative attitudes in another. Instead, the source of the problem must be viewed in structural terms, specifically, how well does research training offered in schools of social work across the country mesh with the interests of students in graduate social work education?[9] Apparently not well at all. Much research training would seem to be relevant neither to student interests nor to the interests of graduates in their professional careers.

Two major goals for research training for all students in graduate social work education are prescribed by the Council on Social Work Education: to develop practitioners who will utilize research (research consumers), and to develop practitioners who will conduct research (research participants).[10] As suggested above, neither of these goals appear to have been attained for two related reasons: (1) curriculum content of courses has traditionally focused on a body of knowledge that may not directly relate to achieving the most meaningful result for social work; and (2) too little attention has been paid the differing needs and career interests of students.

Divergent Practice Interests

The customary approach to research instruction in graduate social work education employs a course structure designed to teach students to conduct nomothetic research methodologies. These methods involve experimental design, field studies, and social surveys wherein data are collected on large samples or populations of people or events. As Hudson has noted, these methods depend on some form of data aggregation as a means of summarizing and describing obtained information,[11] nearly always relying on such devices as the arithmetic mean, median, percentage distributions and the like. Such aggregation of data obviously provides invaluable information about groups, information of great interest to social work students and practitioners with "macro" interests such as community work, planning, and administration, who deal with problems of collectivities, organizations, communities and large systems.

Surveys and field studies may not be so interesting to the worker who is concerned with a single client, however. In essence we have ignored the students who are interested in "micro" social work -- work with individuals, families and groups as clinical treatment practitioners. Given the differences among "micro" and "macro" concerns, different types of research knowledge may be appropriate. Unfortunately, social work education has not distinguished between the two interest groups.[12] It has been assumed that all students, regardless of practice interests, should be taught principles and methods of conducting nomothetic research.

Research Participation and Consumption

Even acknowledging the fact that nomothetic research is a prime tool for identifying effective programs and techniques of intervention in a large number of cases, instructing students in how to conduct such research does not necessarily speak to the second CSWE goal for research training -- learning how to utilize it. Differing skills (with obvious overlap) are required for conducting and utilizing research. Traditional research curricula have focused on the former; thus, with more or less success, students have been taught to develop research questions, specify objectives, derive samples, develop questionnaires, analyze data,[13] and write research reports. Far less attention has been paid to research consumerism; development of skills and attitudes regarding research analysis and evaluation often has not been part of research courses and projects.

Confluence of the Issues

As the above analysis suggests, the focus on training for and conducting only one type of research has been dysfunctional for the profession. All students, regardless of practice interests, should be taught research that pertains to their career needs, both as research consumers and participants.

Recent developments in research make differentiation among the needs and interests of students not only more obvious, but more easily approached in the curriculum. The last 20 years have witnessed the development of an entirely new research technology. Variously called idiographic research, single system design, or time series design, this research potentially can meet the previously ignored needs of by far the largest segment of graduate social work students -- the clinicians.[14] This methodology helps the clinician monitor and evaluate his progress, effectiveness and efficiency with each and every case. It is the epitome of practice research, designed for use by the practitioner and client or client-group in a way that will produce more objective and clearer practice benefits in clinical or micro situations than more traditional methods of evaluation or research. In fact, the development and refinement of this technology makes possible the development of a curriculum that offers:

1. Courses on research analysis focused on research consumership for all students.

2. Courses on nomothetic methods for "macro" students.

3. Courses on idiographic methods for "micro" students.

IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSED PROGRAM

The faculty of the University of Hawaii School of Social Work has recently completely revised its research curriculum in line with the preceding

discussion. The key assumptions underlying these revisions are:

1. Traditional research training in social work has not been successful.

2. Research training should be directly relevant to the practice interests of students.

3. Research is a key part of the curriculum and its instruction should be relevant and complementary to other parts of the curriculum.

Based on these assumptions, the new program takes its goals from the faculty's perceptions of the two most important purposes of research training for social work practitioners:

1. To provide positive attitudes toward, and skills that can be used in, the analysis and consumption of available research to enhance development of an empirical orientation to practice.

2. To teach students research methods that will have direct impact on and relevance to their own practice.

Two programs of research were implemented for Fall semester 1977. One was a program for all students and the other a practice concentration in research for students whose goal was to become a social work researcher.

Curriculum for All Students

Based on the assumption that research is a critical component of the curriculum, students are required to take four semesters of research courses (ranging from eight to ten credits). However, considerable flexibility is built into the system so students are allowed several options to meet their own interests.

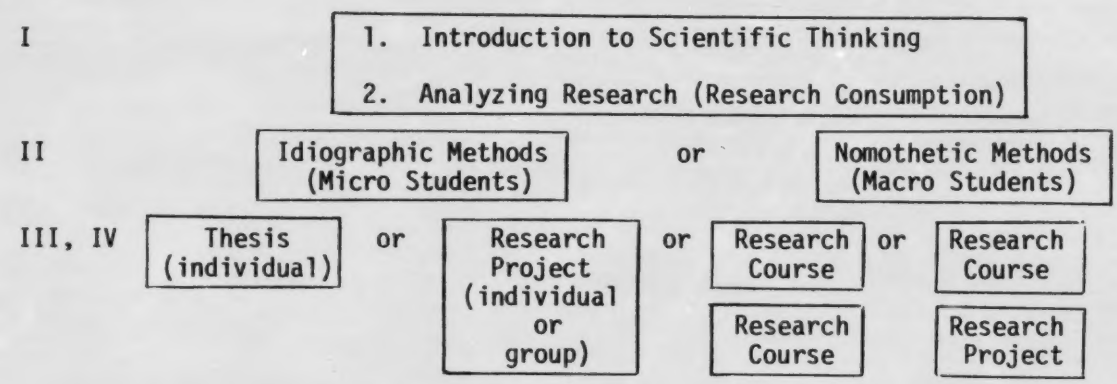
The First Year. All students are required to take the same introductory course. This course covers the following topics: (1) an introduction to scientific thinking; (2) brief overviews of the two types of research -- nomothetic and idiographic -- to familiarize students with the basic components; and (3) specific skill training and development of critical attitudes regarding the importance of analyzing and consuming research. The major focus of this introductory course is on learning to anlayze and evaluate research as a guide to critical consumership. Much of this focus is on analysis of nomothetic research, to ensure that all students are familiar with its basic components.

In the second semester of the first year, students are given a choice between two courses focused on in-depth knowledge of research methods. The choice is made, depending on the student's practice interests, between:

(1) nomothetic research methods, for students interested in macro social work methods, and (2) idiographic research methods, for students interested in micro social work methods. These courses represent a critical choice for the students. They are designed to fit special needs and interests and to be relevant to particular areas of practice specialty.

The Second Year. In the second year, students have several options for fulfilling the research requirement. (1) Students may complete a thesis (one student working with a committee of three graduate faculty). (2) Students may conduct a two-semester research project -- one to six students working with one faculty member. It should be pointed out that most projects completed in this option consist of the students conducting the entire project from start to finish rather than simply assisting in some obscure part of a faculty member's research with little reward in terms of understanding or participating in the entire research process. (3) Students can select two research courses from several available. Most of these courses focus on an advanced level of study of research analysis and consumption in specific substantive fields, with the fields changing from semester to semester depending on student and faculty interests. (4) Students also can select a one-semester research course and a one-semester research project to be carried out under the supervision of a faculty member.

The basic design for the research curriculum can be diagrammed as follows:



Research Concentration

For the small but growing number of students who wish research to be their major concentration, the school offers a specific research concentration. In the first semester, the same introductory research course that is taken by all students is taken by research concentration students. In the second semester, these students take a specially designed three-credit

course focusing on an introduction to data analysis and nomothetic design, plus the two-credit idiographic research methods course. The third and fourth semesters involve two advanced courses, one of which is required to be on quantitative methods. The other course in the area of design or statistics is to be selected from a list of available courses. Students in the research concentration also are required to complete a thesis under the supervision of three members of the graduate faculty.

CONCLUSION

This curriculum is guided less by empirical evidence (what is demonstrated to work) than by the informed opinions of the faculty about what appears to be the best and most effective form of research education for students, especially in view of the problems in the traditional approach to teaching research. There is little or no evidence to indicate which of the teaching methods are best.[15] Also, as yet there is no evidence that research learning such as that taught at Hawaii generalizes to practice and whether, if it does, it clearly adds an identifiable increment to effective practice. The school hopes to study the effects of this program on a longitudinal basis to determine its effectiveness. The first year's data are currently being analyzed. Preliminary results of an attitudinal survey show practically 100 percent agreement among students that the breakdown into nomothetic and idiographic research methods courses is relevant to their own practice interests. Thus, while in the faculty's opinion this curriculum seems to be the best being offered at this time, it is hoped that the development of the research curriculum will be strongly affected by results from the evaluation of its impact, as well as by reports of similar research by other schools.

Since one of the goals of this research curriculum is to make research more relevant to practice, it should also be pointed out that there are other ways to approach this goal in developing a curriculum. One alternative to keeping practice and research courses separate is to teach both practice and research in the same courses, thereby eliminating the research course (e.g., the second semester research "methods" course at the University of Hawaii). This perhaps is the ultimate in integrating research and practice.

On the other hand, there are some problems in such a union. One problem is that in some schools, it simply may be politically impossible to accomplish. Another problem is that one or both of the content areas -- research or practice -- may suffer since a given instructor may choose to emphasize one area over the other. Related to this problem is that some instructors, perhaps lacking expertise in one of the areas, may simply pay lip service to one (the research component) while focusing almost exclusively on the other (the practice component). Although any or all of these problems may be overcome, keeping the courses separate insures that both practice and research components of the curriculum are adequately represented. The major integration can then occur through applications in the

practicum, readings in relevant practice/research areas, and course assignments such as conducting actual case studies using appropriate practice/research methods to monitor and evaluate programs.

It should be noted that this or any other research curriculum has little or no control over a variety of factors that may be crucial in molding student attitudes toward research, including agency norms and supports, or other faculty opinions.[16] However, awareness of these conditions (changes in which could form the basis for future investigation) should not preclude the attempt to make basic changes at the levels at which there is some control over both input and outcome.

This curriculum is not intended to work in isolation from other parts of the curriculum, where the utilization of research findings is encouraged as strongly as possible. Indeed, the specific research courses are intended to complement the other courses, both in helping students understand and utilize the results of research in those courses, and in providing a base for truly integrating research and practice in the methods or practice courses and in the practicum.

4

TOWARD AN INTEGRATION OF RESEARCH AND PRACTICE IN THE SOCIAL WORK CURRICULUM: A DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF A ONE-QUARTER COURSE[1]

Edward J. Mullen, Gerald J. Bostwick, Jr. and Barbra Ryg

A persistent dilemma in social work education has been the difficulty of integrating research and practice learning.[2] This problem has further manifested itself in practice, where research findings have often been viewed as irrelevant and of little use as an intervention guide.[3]

Various reasons for the tendency of practitioners as well as practice educators not to use research have been set forth in the literature. It is frequently suggested that practitioners tend not to use the products of research because they are not technically prepared to "read" research reports.[4] It has also been suggested that practitioners and practice students tend not to use research results because they are often inconsistent, fragmentary, and ambiguous. Yet, as Chambers has noted:

> Knowledge about the human condition is not going to be any less partial or less contradictory or more complete in the near future, nor has the profession the luxury to await that development. The point here is that any solution of the problem of enabling the practitioner to use the product of science has to deal with the product of science in its present form. The relevant question here then is how to construct a curriculum that will prepare practitioners to utilize a product of science that is at once poverty stricken, clearly incomplete and contradictory.[5]

According to Chambers, then, social work practitioners can no longer afford to dismiss the validity of all practice-relevant research categorically. Instead, they must be willing to accept the fact that such research, at any given point, will always be somewhat incomplete and contradictory.

These limitations, however, should not preclude the practitioner's use of research that is available and methodologically sound. The challenge facing the educator, therefore, is one of enabling future practitioners to examine critically and use selectively research findings that show some consistency and that lend themselves readily to immediate practice applications.

This paper presents the design and implementation of a graduate-level course developed in an attempt to address this challenge. More specifically, the paper will provide a description of the course, followed by an analysis of its impact on student attitudes toward and utilization of practice-relevant research.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A one-quarter, microsystem-level research utilization course was offered at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration during the 1976-77 and 1977-78 academic years. The course was designed as a research elective for first- and second-year students who had completed at least a one-quarter introductory research methods course. Although most of the students were enrolled concurrently in a field placement, the course was not formally integrated with field learning.

The course attempted to bridge the gap between research and practice learning by providing an opportunity for students to develop skills needed to formulate a personal, working model for practice -- a model grounded to the extent possible in research evidence concerning practice effectiveness. It sought to engage the students in a critical examination of this evidence and to encourage their use of it when they constructed and explicated their working models. Further objectives of this approach to teaching were: (1) to make the students cognizant of the need to develop, modify and refine explicit, individualized models of practice useful for guiding their interventions; (2) to sensitize the students to the grounding of those models; (3) to encourage the students to seek research evidence actively; and (4) to foster a concern for effectiveness and professional accountability.

The course used a social systems perspective concerning social intervention as an organizing framework. This perspective assumes that effective intervention is a function of a large number of interacting components, including qualities of the environment, organization, intervenor, client, and intervenor-client interaction, as well as intervention techniques. This framework makes two additional assumptions. First, no single intervention quality or technique can be understood in terms of effectiveness without weighing other interacting components in the intervention system.[6] Second, research-grounded practice models will always include ungrounded practice assumptions and such models will always require adaptation to specific situations.

The course was composed of four learning units. Initially, the students were familiarized with the major issues and general conclusions

concerning the effects of social intervention through reading selected materials from social work literature and the literature of allied disciplines. It was within this context that students were made aware of such issues as accountability, evaluation, and the integration of research and practice. The second unit considered the structure and function of models and theories of social intervention and then examined methods for constructing personal practice models. It was within the context of this unit that students explored the role of induction and deduction in model building and testing, as well as the function of empirical grounding. Five interrelated steps for utilizing research in the formulation of a practice model were discussed: (1) identification of substantive findings concerning intervention variables and their effects on clients; (2) assessment of the quality of the supporting evidence; (3) development of summary generalizations based on the research findings; (4) deduction of practice guidelines; and (5) specification of an evaluation/feedback plan.[7]

The third unit engaged the students in a critical, systematic examination of the research-practice literature. Because of the large number of currently available studies on effectiveness, class readings were primarily composed of general reviews of research. These reviews were then supplemented by an examination of key studies which were particularly suited to learning about components associated with effective social intervention. The research literature was explored in relation to five general categories.[8] First, the students looked at evidence concerning nonspecific or placebo-related qualities. Next, they examined research evidence concerning organizational qualities associated with effective intervention. Intervenor and intervenor-client interaction effects were then reviewed, followed by a critical assessment of research pertaining to client qualities. Finally, research findings concerning effective techniques of social intervention were examined.

Throughout this process, the students were instructed to assess critically the consistency and quality of the evidence related to specific intervention components, as well as the conditions under which those components were effective. As a final requirement for the course, students presented a paper describing and explicating a personal, working model of practice grounded to the extent possible in the research examined during the course. In concert with the five-step research utilization process, this paper was to include the students' summary generalizations, research-grounded practice principles, and practice guidelines derived from other sources (such as personal and professional values). The students were also expected to discuss the monitoring/feedback plan they had designed and used to assess the effects of their interventions.

COURSE EVALUATION

Questions

The objectives of the course suggested a consideration of four major questions. First, given the emphasis on using research to construct

practice models, a central question was: Did students use research to a greater extent after taking the course than they did prior to the course and was any apparent change durable? Second, since the course emphasized the appropriate use of research findings, it was expectable that students would not exclude professional and personal values, practice wisdom, and a priori or intuitive reasoning as grounding for their practice models. Therefore, another important question was: To what extent did the students who increased their use of research concomitantly decrease their use of professional and personal values, practice wisdom, or a priori reasoning as grounding for their interventions? Third, the emphasis on a system's framework in which intervention effects are viewed as a function of the many interacting intervention components (rather than any single or limited number of components) led to an equally important question: Did students incorporate more of the system components after taking the course than prior to the course and was any apparent change durable? And fourth, since the course emphasized the development of pragmatic models which are relevant to practice, an important question was: Did students develop models for which opportunities for their application existed?

Design

Evaluation was designed to be an exploratory, descriptive assessment of the possible effects of the course on the students. No attempt was made to sort out the effects of this course from those of the students' other classes and field learning experiences. Moreover, no attempt was made to specify findings controlling for student characteristics. These limitations should be kept in mind when interpreting the findings presented below.

A self-report questionnaire was administered during the spring quarter of 1978 to four cohorts of students who had completed the course during the 1976-1977 and 1977-1978 academic years. Most of the students in the fourth cohort (post-group, N=15) completed the questionnaire during the final class, whereas students in the other three cohorts (follow-up group, N=38) received the questionnaire in the mail. The questionnaires were distributed to 75 students and returned by 53 (71 percent).

Student Characteristics

Forty-nine percent of the 53 respondents were in their second year when they enrolled in the course; 40 percent were first-year students and 11 percent were PhD students. One-third of these students had graduated and were gainfully employed. Ages ranged from 22 to 52, with a median of 26. Sixty percent of the students were female, 59 percent were single, and 88 percent were white. Ninety-four percent of the students specialized in social treatment and the remaining 6 percent in social development. Approximately 68 percent of the students had majored in social work, psychology, or sociology as undergraduates.[9] At the time the questionnaires were completed, the majority reported no more than one year of social work experience.

Findings

Research Utilization Practices. A necessary first step in the research utilization process, which was emphasized in class, concerns the reading of research reports. Seventy-six percent of the students reported reading research articles at least weekly or monthly. However, 24 percent reported reading research reports only twice a year or less and 30 percent noted that frequently they read only the conclusions of those reports.[10] Twenty percent stated that they frequently have difficulty understanding the analyses of statistical data contained in these research reports.

Since the class emphasized the use of research in practice, students were asked how often they used knowledge gained from research articles in their practice. Of those who responded, 42 percent reported that they used research frequently. In contrast, 19 percent stated that they seldom utilized research knowledge. The remaining students reported occasional applications. Several reasons were identified as limiting the usefulness of available research. In general, the students felt that poor designs and inadequate reporting techniques were the main problems restricting the application of research results in practice. Irrelevant topics, faulty measuring procedures, and student difficulty in understanding statistics were also cited as limiting factors. Together, these five factors were mentioned by 86 percent of the students.[11]

The information presented above describes the students' reported practices at the time the questionnaire was completed and does not provide information about changes in utilization associated with the course. To address this issue, students were asked to state whether or not they used practice guidelines which they had derived from research findings prior to the course and upon completion of the course. Forty-five percent reported utilizing research-grounded practice guidelines prior to the course and 90 percent reported utilizing such guidelines upon completion of the course. Of those reporting use of research-grounded practice guidelines prior to the course, 35 percent stated that such guidelines were a major emphasis in their overall approach to practice; the comparable figure for "upon completion of the course" was 60 percent.[12] These findings clearly indicate a marked increase in the number of students who used research as grounding and a marked increase in the emphasis placed on research grounding in their overall approach to practice.

In an attempt to secure information about the durability of these changes, the students in the follow-up group were asked to state whether or not research-derived practice guidelines were included in their current practice models and if so, what emphasis was placed on them. Approximately 45 percent of these respondents were completing their first year of practice following graduation and the remaining 55 percent had completed the course at least four months earlier (some as many as 17 months earlier). Eighty-seven percent of the respondents reported continued use of research-grounded guidelines in their practice models. Of these, 52 percent reported such guidelines to be a major emphasis in their models.

These results indicate a substantial increase in the use of research upon completion of the course and further support the durability of this increase. However, for some students (perhaps one in ten) research findings do not appear to have been viewed as relevant to practice.

Use of Nonresearch Grounding. Since the course sought to increase the students' use of relevant research, it was anticipated that research utilization would not preclude the use of other sources of grounding. Rather, it was expected that research findings would augment the use of professional and personal values, practice wisdom, and a priori or intuitive reasoning. To examine this issue, respondents were again asked to indicate whether or not these various sources were used in deriving practice guidelines and if so, what emphasis was placed on each.

Table 1

Percent of Students Using Five Sources for Derivation of Practice Guidelines: Prior To and After Course Completion

Time	Source				
	Research	Practice Wisdom	A Priori Reasoning	Professional Values	Personal Values
Prior	45	98	84	94	94
Completion	90	100	81	100	88
Change	+45	+2	-3	+6	-6

From Table 1, one can see that the marked increase in the use of research results does not seem to have affected the students' use of other sources of grounding. All sources (other than research) were used extensively prior to the course and the changes that did occur were slight. Only personal values and a priori reasoning were used by fewer students at the end of the course. Students in the follow-up group were also asked to provide information concerning their current use of these five sources. The only apparent difference between "current" and "upon completion of course" grounding sources was in the use of personal values. While use of personal values for this group had dropped 8 percent "upon completion of course," "current" use returned to the "prior to course" level. With respect to emphasis, only slight shifts were noted. More specifically, there was a slight decrease in emphasis on personal values and a priori reasoning. On the other hand, there was a slight increase in emphasis on professional values and practice wisdom.

Intervention System Components. In an attempt to determine if students incorporated more of the system components after taking the course, the respondents were asked to report whether or not they included each of the components examined in class in their personal models for practice prior to taking the course.

Table 2

Percent of Students Including Various Components in Their Personal Practice Models: Prior To and Upon Completion of Course

Dimension	Time Period		
	Prior to Course	Upon Completion of Course	Net Change
Common Components:			
Organizational Qualities	45%	76%	+31%
Intervenor Qualities	87	94	+ 7
Client Qualities	77	90	+13
Intervenor-Client Relationship	71	88	+17
Techniques:			
Structuring	62	86	+24
Psychoanalytic	62	54	- 8
Desensitization	22	36	+14
Operant Conditioning	45	57	+ 8
Modeling	67	76	+ 9
Cognitive	63	78	+15
Marital-Family	51	74	+23
Group	57	61	+ 4
Nonspecific/Placebo Components	54	82	+28

As Table 2 illustrates, most of the dimensions considered in class were already included in the practice models of many students prior to the course.[13] Only organizational qualities and the techniques of systematic desensitization and operant procedures were included by less than half of the students. Yet, upon completion of the course all of the components except psychoanalytic techniques reflected an increase. The most pronounced increases occurred in four areas: organizational qualities, nonspecific placebo qualities, structuring techniques, and the use of specific marital and family techniques. Upon completion of the course, only the technique of systematic desensitization continued to be included by less than half of the students.

As previously mentioned, students reporting inclusion of a particular component in their practice models were also asked to indicate the emphasis given to that component. These ratings are presented in Table 3. It should be noted that the unequal number of respondents for the "prior to course" and the "upon course completion" groups makes interpretation of these findings problematic. These data, therefore, can only be treated as impressionistic.

The data in Table 3 seem to indicate that the emphasis placed on all components was in the "moderate" range. Slight increases were evident in only three areas (intervenor, client, and intervenor-client interaction qualities) and a slight decrease was apparent in only one area, psychoanalytic techniques.

When we look at the follow-up group separately, we find that the tendency for an increased inclusion of each of the components found between the time prior to the course and at course completion was also generally evident in these students' "current" models. The techniques of modeling, operant conditioning, and systematic desensitization reflected the largest "upon course completion" to "current" increase (14 percent, 11 percent, and 11 percent, respectively). The only reversal of this trend was noted for psychoanalytic techniques, where the "current" level of inclusion returned to the "prior to course" level (prior = 63 percent, upon completion = 53 percent, and current = 63 percent).

With few exceptions, most of the components measured were incorporated by more students after the course had ended.[14] The only exception to this involved the use of psychoanalytic techniques (-8 percent), personal values (-6 percent), and a priori reasoning (-3 percent). Components showing noticeable pre-post course changes were: nonspecific factors (30 percent), organizational-agency factors (30 percent), structuring (25 percent), and marital-family techniques (23 percent). Similarly, systematic desensitization (15 percent), operant procedures (12 percent), modeling (9 percent), group techniques (4 percent), and cognitive techniques (15 percent) changed in a positive direction.

One might conclude as a consequence of available data that the models course provided the students with a wide range of knowledge concerning components of social intervention. The culmination of such a diverse

Table 3

Median Emphasis Rating for Various Components in Practice Models for Those Students Including the Component: Prior To and Upon Completion of Course

Dimension	Time Period: Prior to Course		Time Period: Upon Completion of Course		Net Change
	Md	N	Md	N	Md
Common Components:					
Organizational Qualities	2[a]	24	2	39	0
Intervenor Qualities	2	45	3	50	+1
Client Qualities	2	40	3	47	+1
Intervenor-Client Relationship	2	38	3	47	+1
Techniques:					
Structuring	2	32	2	45	0
Psychoanalytic	3	32	2	30	-1
Desensitization	2	11	2	18	0
Operant Conditioning	2	23	2	29	0
Modeling	2	34	2	39	0
Cognitive	2	32	2	40	0
Marital-Family	3	25	3	39	0
Group	2	28	2	32	0
Nonspecific/Placebo Components	2	28	2	44	0

a The scale ranged from a low of 1 representing "minor model emphasis" to a high of 4 representing "total model emphasis."

exposure was the formulation of eclectic and utilitarian models for practice. The durability of this change is demonstrated by the follow-up group. The majority of respondents continued to develop and refine their practice models after having completed the models course earlier. Perhaps most important to keep in mind is the fact that all of the components continued to play some role in the various models that were developed.

Table 4

Percent of Respondents Reporting That Opportunity for Application of Model Component Exists and Percent of Clients With Whom Component is Used

Dimension	Responses	
	Percent Reporting Opportunity for Application	Percent of Clients With Whom Applied
Common Components:		
Organizational Qualities	68	59
Intervenor Qualities	94	97
Client Qualities	88	75
Intervenor-Client Relationship	96	73
Techniques:		
Structuring	77	58
Psychoanalytic	66	57
Desensitization	40	19
Operant Conditioning	56	58
Modeling	80	54
Cognitive	79	50
Marital-Family	69	50
Group	58	46
Nonspecific/Placebo Components	86	98

Application of Models. The final question concerned the existence of opportunities in practice for the students to apply their models. If the respondents indicated that they had an opportunity to apply each of the components, they were then asked to approximate the percentage of clients for whom the components was appropriate.

As illustrated in Table 4, most students felt that they had had an opportunity to apply the various components that made up their practice models. The only components that were employable by less than 60 percent of the students were: group techniques, operant procedures, and systematic desensitization. Psychoanalytic and marital-family techniques and organizational-agency qualities were usable by 60-70 percent of the students. Opportunities to apply the remaining components ranged from 77-96 percent.

The students' views on the applicability of the various components with their clients can be summarized as follows: High: nonspecific placebo, intervenor, intervenor-client, and client components (73-98 percent); Moderate: all of the remaining components except desensitization (46-58 percent); and Low: systematic desensitization (19 percent). On the whole, the high percentage of clients with whom the various components were viewed as appropriate seems to support the conclusion that the students developed multidimensional (multi-component) models which were relevant to their practice situations and which were generally applicable. Also, it is interesting to note that of those follow-up students who reported that they encountered some difficulty when implementing their models, most viewed agency-related factors as the main obstacle. Large caseloads, lack of agency interest in evaluating effectiveness, and supervisor lack of interest in model building and evaluation were cited most frequently.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper has presented an evaluation of a one-quarter research utilization course offered at the graduate level. The primary objective of this course was to provide students with skills in the development of personal, working models for practice grounded to the extent possible in relevant research evidence. This was achieved through engaging the students in a critical examination of research concerning effective intervention with individuals, couples, families, and small groups.

Generally, more students reported using and emphasizing research-grounded practice guidelines in their models upon completion of the course. This increase was found to be sustained during the follow-up period. In addition, this increased use of research was not found to affect the students' use of practice wisdom, a priori reasoning, and values as grounding for their models. Rather, research was integrated with these other grounding sources. Student practice models were more multidimensional upon completion of the course and this eclecticism was sustained after graduation. Following completion of the course, students tended to give greater attention to organizational qualities, nonspecific placebo qualities, intervenor and client qualities, relationship

qualities, and structuring techniques. The models that were developed were generally utilitarian with a high reported application potential in practice.

While these findings are clearly consistent with the course's objectives and are, therefore, encouraging, several others are less consistent. Twenty-four percent of the respondents reported reading research reports only twice a year or less and 30 percent stated that they frequently read only the conclusions of such reports. This seems to suggest that for nearly a third of the respondents, research evidence was not an integral part of their practice models. It appears that while most of these practitioners have an interest in using research, at least a third have difficulty critically reviewing research findings because of either time constraints or problems interpreting statistical data. Clearly at variance with the course's objectives is the finding that approximately 10 percent of the respondents do not include research-grounded practice guidelines in their models. This evaluation, however, did not attempt to isolate the characteristics of these students or the reasons for their lack of use of research in practice.

The limitations of this course and of the evaluation should be kept in mind when drawing inferences from these findings. The evaluation was relatively uncontrolled and, therefore, the findings must be treated as impressionistic. Concurrent learning experiences in other classes and in the field are confounded with those in this course; thus, the question of what caused the reported changes is ambiguous. Moreover, although this sample is representative of the general student population at the School of Social Service Administration, the opinions of the 29 percent who did not return the questionnaire are unknown.

Based on our experience with this course, we would recommend a two or three quarter course which would be integrated with the students' field learning. One structure with which we are currently experimenting will attempt such an integration. More specifically, the research utilization approach discussed in this paper will become part of one section of the first year (three-quarter) social work practice course required of all entering master's-level students. In addition, a planning and feedback laboratory will be used to facilitate applications and assessments of classroom learning in the field. Concurrently, each student will take a two-quarter research methods course which should further facilitate learning of the research utilization and evaluation process. Our successful experience with the one-quarter course, together with a recognition of its limitations, suggests the value of experimenting with this more complex curriculum directed toward the pragmatic integration of research and practice learning.

PART II

SEPARATE APPROACHES

5

THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH TO SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH EDUCATION: AVANT-GARDE OR BACKWARD?

Robert W. Weinbach and John T. Gandy

After tracing trends in research content within social work curricula, Kim recently concluded that, "the social work research component in the MSW program has been moving toward the twilight zone in social work academia."1 In the same article he proposes a curriculum model which reflects a heavy research emphasis within masters' programs. He suggests that a mastery of advanced statistics and research design and the completion of an independent research project or thesis might be components of the MSW curriculum as part of a total reemphasis on research across all levels of social work education.2

In many ways, Kim's "solution" is more reminiscent of social work education of the 1950s or 60s than it is new or innovative. His model is courageous, considering the present skepticism toward the place of research in the curriculum. When the University of South Carolina applied for admission to candidacy for accreditation of its new MSW program in 1969, it proposed a four semester research sequence which was clearly in opposition to the trend which stressed a de-emphasis of research. The application document stated that:

> In order to achieve the minimum goals of the research sequence, each student should develop the necessary knowledge and skills to be an intelligent consumer of research reports and other professional literature...the students should, upon graduation, be prepared to work as members of a research team under supervision, or to continue their studies in the area of research at an advanced level.3

At two junctures in the brief history of the school, a commitment to a heavy research component was reaffirmed. In a review for re-accredita-

tion in 1973,[4] the importance of research content in addressing the school's objectives was evident in the report of the faculty. In the spring of 1975, a curriculum reorganization occurred which resulted in a shift of credit hours among sequence areas. The faculty elected to retain the existing four semesters of research, and in fact to increase the total number of research credit hours from ten to twelve.

With such reemphasis on the research component, the curriculum of the University of South Carolina College of Social Work became both increasingly traditional and at the same time increasingly out-of-step with recent trends. What is the primary rationale for the heavy research emphasis? What are its characteristics as they are translated into course requirements? How effective is the program in achieving objectives? Does the indicated level of success suggest that a similar emphasis can continue to be justified in the future, given other educational needs within a time-constrained curriculum?

THE RATIONALE

When the first students were admitted to the program in 1969, the state ranked fiftieth in MSW trained social workers per capita. As a result, recent graduates have often found that they enter practice, not at the usual "beginning-level" positions, but in higher level administrative-management capacities. The usual progression of caseworker-supervisor-administrator is more exception than rule; a graduate is frequently the first and only masters' trained person in an agency. As instant administrators, graduates have found themselves emersed in the "policy-planning" activities described in recent administration literature.5 They have had to supervise and often personally to conduct research in order to provide a data base for informed administrative decision-making. The need for graduates who could step into this role competently was anticipated by social work faculty at South Carolina and formed part of the rationale for a heavy research component within the MSW curriculum.

The state of the existing data base available for social service planning and delivery provided a second major rationale for the research emphasis. At the time the program began, confusion and knowledge gaps affecting thousands of persons characterized the climate in which decisions were made. Several major agencies had no idea whom they served, what other agencies might offer duplicate services and what potential client groups were not having their needs addressed. Evaluation of services was generally a matter of totaling the number of client-social worker contact hours and comparing current totals with those of previous years. The faculty hoped that the thesis-level project requirement for graduate social work students would result in reports that would contribute to the existing data base and provide agencies with research findings that could not be generated using internal resources.

At about the time that the gap in hard data for social planning began

to close in the 1970s, a third impetus for continuing heavy emphasis on the research curriculum came in the form of the accountability thrust.[6] When discussion began regarding a possible reduction in research content, the need for hard measurements of efficiency and effectiveness were interpreted as yet another rationale for training social workers who could both understand research reports, and undertake independent research with a high level of autonomy. While concern continues among faculty in other sequences about the "excessive" number of required research courses, at present there remains sufficient faculty support for continuation of specific research content within the curriculum.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH COMPONENT

The two semesters of research study in the first year (no advanced placement option is currently available at South Carolina) are spent in classroom study of research methods and statistics. The two courses (one three-semester hour course each semester) are taught with attention to principles of the scientific method, but with a consistent emphasis on the problems and opportunities encountered by the social work researcher. All faculty who teach the first year courses hold doctoral degrees and have at least one advanced degree in social work. It would be fair to say that they are self-identified first as social workers, not researchers, and as persons who see social work research as an adjunct to the practice of social work methods designed to serve the client better. Research for its own sake is criticized as of little value in that it lacks the potential to assist the practitioner. Similarly, research findings not translated into practice methodology are presented as of relatively low priority.

The first unit, "The Context of Social Work Research," sets the stage for a social work practice emphasis by discussing the unique characteristics of the practice environment and how they tend to shape social work research. The ways in which such social work practice concepts as self-determination, confidentiality, treatment relationships, and measurement of "success" tend to determine what is feasible in social work research are discussed, as are other constraints prevalent in a climate concerned with accountability.

Subsequent units beginning with "Selection of Social Work Research Questions and Priorities" proceed through the usual steps in the research process but, at each point of decision-making, ask the overriding question, "What promises to be of most value to the practitioner?" The first semester concludes with an overview of descriptive statistics and with social work's ethical concerns relating to use of data. The question is asked, "How can central tendency and measures of dispersion be selected which are statistically correct, yet at the same time show a valid presentation of conditions as they exist?"

The second semester continues with the emphasis on the unique characteristics of social work research and the specialized research needs of

practitioners. The first five weeks are devoted to inferential statistics most likely to be encountered in the practice arena. The measurements presented have been consciously selected by the faculty as representing those which occur most frequently in social work research reports and professional journal articles, and those which are best suited to levels and types of data usually employed in research related to the profession. The need for clear communication and ethical use of statistics is stressed repeatedly.

During the next three weeks, students are required to complete a written critique of past social work research (usually a student thesis) and to discuss their evaluation in the form of an ungraded class presentation. An outline is provided for their use which addresses the usual indicators of research quality as well as the potential for utilization of findings by the practitioner.

During the last weeks of the semester, a workshop format is employed in which students form research groups of three to five members and select a research problem. Subsequently they are to develop a formal proposal of from 10 to 20 pages. Class time is used for group meetings with the professor, who serves as an advisor. While students are encouraged to develop a proposal which may, with format modification, be utilized in the second year practicum, it is stressed that the assignment is a first year course requirement designed to demonstrate integration and mastery of content from the first two courses. In the past, less than half the groups as constituted have actually implemented the proposal that they developed for class. They have frequently observed, however, that the experience of writing a proposal for class has greatly facilitated writing of the proposal required as part of the practicum course.

The second year of courses is, in reality, a group research practicum. Guidelines and procedures are presented to the students in a general meeting near the end of the first year's study. Students are reminded that the proposal will be judged on such criteria as (1) its potential to generate knowledge of value to the practitioner, (2) its likelihood of practice utilization, and (3) the logic of social work researchers undertaking the research (as opposed to researchers from another discipline). Students form groups of three to five persons and, with informal input from all faculty whom they may consult, develop a research proposal in the area of their interest or as a response to an agency request to the college. Each year, several student groups have elected to gain approval for their proposal and to begin research implementation during the summer months, a practice encouraged by the faculty.

A research proposal is submitted to members of the Research Committee, composed of research teaching faculty. The committee performs both an advisory and a quality control function. Members determine if the proposed research is feasible (agency letters of endorsement are required where indicated), of a reasonable magnitude, and of significant quality in all respects.

While the committee may be viewed as an obstacle to course completion by some students, its purpose is really to protect student groups from encountering difficulties which would undermine successful completion of the project. If, for example, a group proposes research that cannot reasonably be completed during the academic year, or does not seem to merit the great amount of time and work it would entail, or is apt to be sabotaged because of current political sensitivity in the community, the committee members will share this information in the form of nonapproval rather than to allow students to experience even greater frustration at a later date. At the same time that standardization of work requirements is taking place, committee decisions also attempt to guide students in the development and implementation of research experiences that will be both productive and personally rewarding, with the hope that a positive experience will help foster future enthusiasm for research participation.

Written notification of Research Committee nonapproval is issued to student groups when the proposal is found to be unsatisfactory. Reasons for nonapproval are explained in detail and recommendations for improvement are made in a written memorandum. In some cases, an addendum to the original proposal is all that is required for favorable action at a subsequent meeting; in other instances, a major rewrite may be required before approval is granted and an advisor and reader are assigned.

If a majority of committee members view the proposal as acceptable, the committee chairperson gives the student group written approval and communicates the committee members' concerns in the form of suggested modifications or conditions of approval. The approval memorandum is intended to constitute a contract between the Research Committee and the students, insuring that if the research is completed as proposed, indication of successful completion of the course requirements can be expected.

A principal advisor (usually an experienced research faculty member) and a second reader (another faculty member who may provide expertise in such areas as specialized practice knowledge, report writing, and statistical analysis)are assigned at the time of approval based upon area of expertise, workload, and student group preference. They are selected as a team, with primary consideration given to how their individual strengths will complement each other in the advisory process.

The advisor and the reader assume full responsibility for supervision in the implementation of the research. If significant modifications in the methodology occur or other irresolvable problems among group members and advisor and reader should result, the committee will approve or arbitrate as needed. In most cases, the sole responsibility for supervision and quality control rests with the advisor and reader following committee approval.

Final approval is granted and a "satisfactory" grade awarded when each student has successfully completed his or her agreed upon portion of the research. A possibility, rarely utilized, allows for individual

grades. One or more group members may receive the "S" grade while other members may receive a "U" pending completion of their contracted portion of the research endeavor. In such instances, the delinquent student must reregister for the course until such time as he or she has satisfactorily completed the required work.

The research report is of thesis quality and format, bound appropriately and placed in both university libraries. Students are encouraged to support utilization of their research through such channels as discussion of findings at inservice training sessions or in publications. Abstracts of all students' research have been published and will continue to be published in Arete, the college's professional journal.

A BEGINNING EVALUATION OF THE APPROACH TO RESEARCH LEARNING

A survey undertaken by one of the authors during 1977[7] concluded that the goal of practice utilization of student research has been at least partially achieved. Over half (56 percent) of all research reports of the second year practicum exercise for the years 1971-76 had received some form of practice dissemination or utilization through publication, inservice training sessions, implementation of recommendations, or other means. Longitudinal analysis suggests that this percentage may be on the increase.

A second evaluation component would be available when additional analysis of data from the 1977-78 study of student research learning at South Carolina was completed. The Kirk-Rosenblatt Research Inventory8 was administered to first and second year students at the beginning of classes in September and again in May. The instrument included demographic and attitudinal items as well as a measurement of knowledge of research methodology and statistics. Analysis was designed to cross-tabulate knowledge items with demographic and attitudinal variables, these to be compared with data from the University of Hawaii.[9] That comparison is seen as addressing several issues: the rate of learning among first year students relative to second year students and assessment of whether or not the rate of continued progress during the second year is sufficient to justify continuation of the practicum. Comparison with data from Hawaii (where there are also four semesters of research courses) provides a reference point to ascertain whether the learning rate at South Carolina is relatively good or poor, given what is reflected elsewhere.

CONCLUSIONS

By accepted measures, the approach to teaching research at the University of South Carolina College of Social Work might not be considered innovative. Indeed, to contend that the old is not inherently obsolete or irrelevant to present day needs may be seen as a conservative view,

except that opposition to the current trend to de-emphasize research is itself breaking with what appears to be a growing tradition. Which is tradition and which innovation may not be the crucial question. What we really seek to know is: which teaching design works best in a given set of circumstances? In South Carolina's response perhaps lies both the difference in approach from those of the 1950s, and the vindication of the college's choice of emphasis. The message that permeates all courses and all units is that research is worthless if not utilized, and is an adjunct to, not a distant cousin of, social work service delivery. The degree of success reflected in the approach is, in the opinion of the authors, a direct function of the faculty's success in communicating and exemplifying this message.

6

SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY

Lewis W. Carr

The Howard University School of Social Work has from its inception maintained a strong commitment to the research preparation of graduate social workers. Through the years, since its establishment as an autonomous two-year professional school in 1945, research courses and research projects have been an integral part of the core curriculum for all master's level students. The place of research in the school has been repeatedly reaffirmed by faculty action and strong administrative support. Over time the research curriculum has evolved and responded to new thrusts in social work education while holding to the basic goal of extending the student's spirit of inquiry enhanced by knowledge of the basic methodology of scientific research. More specifically, the objectives are to enable the social work graduate of Howard University to:

1. Maintain a questioning attitude about his or her professional practice and to maintain an open, inquiring, learning mind throughout professional life so as to better understand and be effective within and on behalf of the black community.

2. Identify and formulate questions and hypotheses for study of his or her professional practice and of the institutions and programs which bear on the black community.

3. Participate competently in research undertakings in order to assess and evaluate his or her professional practice and the services and programs which affect the black community.

4. Systematically read, critically evaluate, and appropriately use research findings related to his or her professional practice and the black community.

MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS

The social work research program at Howard is based on several major assumptions, the first being that it is necessary and desirable to foster research in line with the overall mission of the university and the school of social work. The historic mission is "to provide educational experiences that give recognition to, and appreciation of the history, heritage, current needs, strengths, and resources in the black community; to engage students, faculty, and community in scholarly inquiry about the truth of the black experience with a view to formulating systematic knowledge and understanding of that experience; and jointly with others who are major victims of social injustices to conceive, design, and support new systems of service and/or effect changes in existing systems that are not responsive to the special needs of black people."1

A second major assumption of the program is that it is necessary and desirable to respond to both student interests and level of readiness for research. There is considerable variability among entering graduate students in terms of motivation, interest, knowledge and skills for research and statistics. While all candidates must meet a standard relative to research knowledge and skills, learning needs must be individualized in terms of the scope and depth of the research project which the student is expected to formulate and carry out.

A third major assumption is that it is necessary and desirable to prepare social work students to do research as well as to be prepared to be research consumers. It is the view of the faculty that to be an effective user of research one must develop insights and appreciation of the various facets of the research process which grow out of the actual conduct of research. The student as an active learner in doing research is more prepared to appreciate and critique the methodological and statistical components of research writings in social work. Furthermore, such an approach would contribute to developing a pool of black social work researchers as well as prepare students for advanced study in doctoral programs.

RESEARCH CURRICULUM

The objectives of the school's research program are achieved through a sequence of four courses over four semesters. Each course has its own set of proximal objectives stated in terms of knowledge and skills that contribute to the attainment of the overall goals. The first two courses, Research I and II, focus on research methodology and statistics while the second year courses, Research III and IV, focus on the conduct of a social work research project related in most instances to the student's field placement. Throughout the four semesters, the students are encouraged and in various ways are engaged in research related to their social work practice interests and the school's mission -- concern with the black community. The overall attempt is to relate and integrate research with the

student's practice interests. Several opportunities for this integration have been developed in recent years and others are in the process of being developed.

The first two courses focus on research methods and statistics. Second year research courses focus on proposal writing, program evaluation, and carrying out a research project. Research methods and statistics are taught concurrently within the same courses throughout the two years. This circumstance is designed to enable the student to see the interrelationship of statistics and research methodology and design directly as well as to make the study of statistics more relevant to the student's research interest. Major content areas for Research I include:

1. The language and approach of science vis-a-vis the research process;

2. The relation between research and theory in social work practice;

3. The use and evaluation of research literature to facilitate problem formulation and inform practice;

4. The function and principles of measurement; the concepts and procedures of reliability and validity;

5. The use of statistics in social work research and measures of central tendency, variability, and association; and

6. The preparation of data for computer operations, coding, keypunching, use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and use of the IBM 370 computer.

Major content areas of Research II include:

1. Exploratory, descriptive, survey, correlational, and experimental designs;

2. Probability, randomness, and sampling;

3. Methods of data collection;

4. Statistical inference, tests of significance, that is, t-test, one-way analysis of variance, correlation, regression analysis, and chi-square;

5. Continued data processing, use of SPSS and the computer; and

6. Developing a preliminary research proposal which has potential for becoming the research project during the student's second year.

During the second year the student becomes a more active participant in research. The principal task is the formulation and conduct of a research project. At this level, students are sectioned relative to their practice concentration, that is, direct service, administration, and community development. Since the majority of students are in the direct service concentration, they are distributed over several sections while the 15 or 20 students in administration and community development concentrations are grouped in a single section.

In addition to their practice concentration, a second dimension that enters into the shaping of the second year research experience is that of the field of practice of the student. All second year students opt for one of several defined fields of practice. This choice leads to a two-semester course in a field of practice area and a practicum in that field of practice. The school has articulated and developed curricula in the following fields of practice: family and children, health, mental health, public welfare, criminal justice, and gerontology. Second year students focus their research interests in terms of their practice concentration and their field of practice.

Students in the direct service concentration engage in a wide range of studies related to their interests in practice with individuals, families, and small groups as experienced in a given field of practice. Direct service students have researched issues such as these related to foster care, adoption, child and spouse abuse, racial identity and self-concept, posthospital adjustment, continuation in mental health care, recidivism, factors related to adjustment while on probation, and attitudes toward aging. These topics are typically developed in the agency where the student is placed for practicum. The student thus can relate his or her research interest to the realities of the agency as well as use the resources of the agency to carry out research. This research is potentially beneficial to both the learning needs of the student and the ongoing program of the agency.

While the research experience growing out of the student's practice interest and field of practice in a practicum placement promotes practice-based research, there are the realistic problems associated with practice research. Such problems are those related to timely approval of research topics, securing the cooperation and time of busy professional staff, securing the consent and involvement of subjects for study, as well as the many vagaries of agency life. These and other difficulties are in addition to the basic problems of formulating practice-relevant research and the conduct of a research project. The research faculty as well as the practicum instructors are instrumental in guiding the students in dealing with these difficulties and obstacles to research.

The specific course components are:

1. Review and strengthen the knowledge and understanding of research methods and statistics.

2. Know and understand evaluative research and its relationship with experimental design and with program management.

3. Finalize the research proposal including plans for data collection and instrumentation.

4. Engage in data collection and continue the review of literature.

5. Edit the data, develop coding procedures, prepare the data for computer and statistical analyses, prepare SPSS programming required for statistical analyses, and submit the job to be run in the computer center.

6. Analyze the statistical results, state findings, draw conclusions and implications, and write a research report in keeping with professional journal standards.

Those students whose practice concentration is in administration or community development follow a somewhat different course in terms of emphasis. While, like direct service students, these students are involved in the several fields of practice, they differ from direct service students in their focus at the macro level. Their research experience is more the application of research to macro level practices. In particular, the students are engaged in study of data management, management information systems, and program evaluation. Their research projects involve working as a group on administration or community development issues. Thus the students may work on developing components of a management information system or helping set up an evaluation program in an agency. These projects may be carried out in family agency settings or a criminal justice setting or a health setting and so on. This course of study is enhanced by the school's location in Washington, D.C., which affords unique opportunities to link with governmental agencies, legislative units, and policy making bodies.

PRACTICE AND RESEARCH INTEGRATION

Throughout the four semesters, the students are encouraged to engage in research related to their social work practice and to the mission of the school in terms of the black perspective. The overall attempt is to relate and integrate research with the student's social work practice interests and concerns. Students are asked to reflect on their social work field placement experiences, and to bring to bear the research perspective in identifying practice-related issues and questions for study. This process begins early in the first semester and is linked with literature review assignments leading to the preliminary research proposal developed during the second semester. This approach is carried through the second year and becomes the basis for the research project.

In addition, opportunities for further involvement of students in research activities are part of the school's ongoing programs. One such occasion involved 20 students in providing technical assistance to a panel appointed by the mayor of Washington, D.C., to make recommendations on the reorganization of the District's Department of Human Resources. Drawn predominantly from the macro concentration, these students were afforded the opportunity to link their interests in administration and community development with the questions and issues raised by the mayor's task force. Another major source for research experience is through the school's Human Service Evaluation and Research Design Division. This division actively seeks funds for research and demonstration projects wherein students at the master's and doctoral levels have been used as research assistants. Direct service students have been used in studies of the impact of heroin addiction on the black family, and also on case studies of female addicts. The students were involved in interviews as well as assisting in the data processing and analysis of records. Through such efforts within the course of study and involvement in the research work of the school, students are provided opportunities to integrate their practice interest with research.

In summary, the Howard University School of Social Work research curriculum is designed to prepare the graduate student to use research to support social work practice and to participate in research undertakings that have the potential to improve practice and develop knowledge within the black perspective. Throughout, the intent is to provide a solid research and statistical base of knowledge and skills and actively to engage the student in research activities that are related to the student's practice interest and the mission of the school and the university.

7

PROGRAM EVALUATION TRAINING

Harris K. Goldstein and James Proctor

This article describes the training for program evaluators in mental health at Florida State University School of Social Work, a program begun in 1974.[1] It discusses underlying philosophy, planning, recruitment of faculty and students; development, modification and maintenance of the curriculum; selection of internships; and evaluation of the program.[2]

PHILOSOPHY

Three philosophical viewpoints guided the program from the outset. One was the idea that it should be as interdisciplinary as possible, a view commonly held among service providers in mental health centers. The second was that the training should meet the needs of the community mental health field, both present and projected future needs. The third view was that students should be prepared for a career ladder in mental health administration after a program evaluation specialization.

The interdisciplinary nature of the program was operationalized by having persons other than social workers teach courses, by encouraging social work students to take courses in other disciplines, by enrolling students from other departments in social work courses, and by arranging team interdisciplinary field instruction.

To address agency needs, a regional survey was made prior to beginning the program, and other surveys were carried on as it developed. Frequent formal and informal contacts were also made with persons in the mental health establishment in Florida and neighboring states at the local, regional, and state levels. Periodic modifications resulted from both ongoing surveys and interviews.

The preparation for a career ladder was carried out by requiring students to take courses in administration as well as in program evaluation. Experience showed that many program evaluators moved either into administration of agencies or into administration of large program evaluation departments. This kind of training appeared essential. Program evaluation was thus established as a subspecialization in the administrative specialization.

The philosophical bases of the program aided in the establishment of guidelines for many decisions, and helped in preplanning the curriculum and in gaining faculty support and community acceptance. By grafting the program on to the established administration curriculum, few changes were needed and fewer major faculty decisions had to be made. The concern with meeting community needs made it easier to find internships for the program. The career ladder concept helped in recruiting students.

Prior to beginning the program (and prior to writing the grant proposal which funded it), three kinds of planning were carried out: planning for classroom curriculum, for internships, and planning for local, regional, and state needs. The latter required the use of some travel funds and a willingness to modify educational expectations to meet practical needs.

No formal planning committee was set up at FSU, but other schools interested in developing such a program might find a formal committee useful. Instead, persons teaching in research and related courses discussed what kind of curriculum should be offered. The design was subject to considerable modification as the program developed, and after students came back from their internships with reports of what they needed to know. Further faculty and student meetings followed, and frequently utilized valuable input was gathered from students and agency representatives.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Before the grant was written, a decision was made to recruit only from among students who had already been admitted to the school. This policy was continued, but as the program became known and as faculty members made presentations at various program evaluation meetings, persons employed in various organizations contacted the program director or other faculty to learn how to get into the program. The suggestion was made that they first be admitted to the graduate school of social work.

After students were admitted to FSU, a brochure describing the program was sent to all students in the spring or summer prior to the quarter when the student was planning to enter school. Each student was asked to reply on a simple form as to whether he or she was interested in program evaluation.

This plan resulted in three to four times as many students expressing interest in the program as might have been anticipated. Originally, the program was limited to twelve students a year, mainly because of the number of internships available. Whenever possible, to learn more about their motivation, an interview was held with students who expressed an interest. Slightly more than half of these students managed to come in for an interview. Correspondence with others was aimed at obtaining similar information about them and their interests.

Originally, a rating system was established by a faculty committee to accept students into the program. Acceptance was based on their GRE scores, their GPA, their experience, motivation, and other factors. A cut-off point was set on the rating system below which students were not to be accepted into the program. Some exceptions would be made for students who are educationally disadvantaged. Although those students who scored the highest on the rating criteria appeared to have been most successful in the program, experience has indicated that some students below the cut-off point have also done satisfactorily when admitted into the program. Because of this finding, motivation is now being given more weight, provided that the student understands what is expected in the program, and appears to have the basic interests and background.

A number of reasons appeared to explain the high level of interest in the program. One was the possibility of stipends. Some students really were not interested in the program but were seeking financial aid and needed to be helped to withdraw. Others wanted to change the human service delivery system, and saw program evaluation as a way to achieve this goal. Still others appeared to be attracted by the promise of the program to help them locate jobs. As the years have passed, the high success rate of graduates in getting work -- often paying more than the beginning social work positions in direct services -- has vindicated that interest.

FACULTY RECRUITMENT

Florida State was fortunate at the time the grant was written in having several faculty members who were able to teach program evaluation courses. Thus, the grant requested funds only for two field instructors. At that time the belief was held that a field instructor who was a faculty member could teach more than an agency-based person. As the first three years passed, and as problems were encountered by new faculty members who were also new employees in the agencies to which they were assigned, major modifications were made in this viewpoint. In one case this was further complicated by the fact that no previous evaluation had been carried on in the agency. Experience now indicates that a better plan is to use agency personnel as internship instructors and to provide a liaison service from the school. FSU now recommends that recruitment be made only for necessary faculty to teach classroom courses or for liaison with internships (as described in detail below).

The best scource for faculty recruitment to teach program evaluation appears to be recent doctoral graduates rather than persons who have been in the mental health field. This may be because the doctoral graduates have enough expertise in research that they can transfer this into program evaluation, whereas persons working in the mental health field, in general, do not. Experience shows that it is a rare situation indeed where a person in the mental health field also has knowledge of research. FSU was fortunate to obtain the services of such a person.

CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

With the philosophical background described earlier as a guide, three kinds of content were included in the curriculum.

1. General content about the social work helping process with individuals, groups and communities so that the prospective evaluator would understand the treatment process he or she was going to evaluate.

2. Content on administration, organizational behavior, policy development and management.

3. Technical knowledge in research and program evaluation methodology.

FSU operates on a quarterly system; therefore, the reader should keep in mind that the following reference to hours must be adjusted to quarters rather than semesters. In the FSU program, each student is required to complete at least 18 hours of technical program evaluation methodological courses. Since students also have six to nine hours of electives, some students get as many as 27 hours of technical courses related to program evaluation. Thus the technical training compares favorably with that received by many PhD graduates (while at the same time the graduate is not a "barbarian" evaluator in that he does have more than technical knowledge). These 18 quarter hours are divided as follows:

Exhibit 1

Specialized and Technical Courses

Course No.	Quarter Hours	
SOW 5404	4	Introduction to Research Methods and Standards of Research
SOW 5908	1	Introduction to Program Evaluation
SOW 5415	3	Measurement in Social Work Research (statistics)
SOW 5435	4	Evaluative Research
SOW 5614	3	Advanced Seminar in Program Evaluation in Mental
SOW 5465	3	Data Management by Computers /Health
	18 quarter hours - Total[3]	

Program evaluation is a specialization in what is known as the "Administration Track." FSU now has two "tracks," administration and advanced direct service. The latter is called "advanced" since FSU also has a BSW program whose graduates are considered to have beginning competence in direct service. Students with special interests may also elect courses in staff development.

During the first three years many modifications were made in the program evaluation curriculum in all the courses dealing with program evaluation methodology. Additional content was added when students returned from the field or when persons working in program evaluation positions made suggestions that appeared useful. At other points, content was deleted for similar reasons. Courses described below show the relatively stable curriculum that FSU now has after many modifications. Emphasis is now on developing teaching methods and modules which can be used in other schools.

All students at FSU take the same general curriculum during the first two quarters. These courses aim at providing a "core" understanding of social work. They include:

Exhibit 2

First Quarter Courses

Course No.	Quarter Hours	
SOW 5195	4	Introduction to General Systems Theory for Social Work
SOW 5105	3	Social Work with Individuals and Families
SOW 5342	3	Techniques of Work with Individuals and Families
SOW 5404	4	Introduction to Mental Health Research
	14 quarter hours - Total	

The program evaluation student in the first quarter differs from other students only in that he or she takes the course, "Introduction to Program Evaluation," previously referred to, instead of a human relations lab. The purpose of this course is to give an early explanation of what program evaluators do so that the student can confirm whether he or she wants to remain in program evaluation or make an early change. In the course, students are introduced to program evaluation literature and persons working in program evaluation positions. Another objective of the course is to identify some problems of program evaluators in agencies and how to overcome them. Various persons working in the program evaluation field are brought in as role models in the course to discuss whay they are doing, to tell the satisfaction and challenges of their jobs and to answer students' questions.

All students in all specializations take the curriculum listed below for the second quarter. These, along with the first field instruction in the spring, provide "core" content in social work and knowledge of direct services.

Exhibit 3

Second Quarter Courses

Course No.	Quarter Hours	
SOW 5415	3	Measurements in Social Work Research (statistics) (or elective if student has had statistics as undergraduate)
SOW 5165	3	Group and Community Behavior
SOW 5344	3	Social Work with Groups and Communities
SOW 5233	4	Social Welfare Policies and Programs
	13 quarter hours - Total	

Since program evaluation students will not have taken the human relations lab in the fall quarter, they take this course, SOW 5704, in addition to the above, in the winter (second) quarter.

In the spring quarter all students, regardless of specialization, have internships in direct service. For program evaluation students, this means a placement in a comprehensive mental health center. The philosophy behind this placement is that once students experience what the service providers do, they are better able to work with them to evaluate the effectiveness of the mental health programs.

The specialization for program evaluation students really begins in the summer quarter, and this is the time when they must make a firm decision about this specialization.

During the summer quarter, program evaluation students take the following courses:[4]

Exhibit 4

Specialized Courses Relating to Program Evaluation

Course No.	Quarter Hours	
SOW 5435	4	Evaluative Research (Intermediate)
SOW 5383	4	Theory and Practice of Social Administration
SOW 5614	3	Advanced Seminar in Program Evaluation in Mental Health
SOW 5465	3	Data Management by Computers
	14 quarter hours - Total	

The evaluation research course, SOW 5435, stresses development of experimental designs for evaluating the success of a program. It includes material on such matters as how to improve internal and external validity of experiments, and data collection methods.

The seminar in program evaluation methods, SOW 5614, is designed to provide the students with the methodological skills, other than those related to evaluating an agency program, that he or she will need as a program evaluator. This includes methodology on how to carry out needs studies, how to develop and maintain management information systems, how to evaluate individual and group therapy (usually by goal attainment scaling and other methods), some material on cost-benefit analysis, quality assurance, and other activities specified by PL 94-63 that are required of program evaluators in community mental health centers.

The course on data management by computers, SOW 5465, includes experience in how to use some canned computer programs such as BMD, SPSS, and ISIS, on actual data. Students also learn to write up reports from their computer output in a form that is useful to a director of a mental health agency or a board. They learn how to use a computer to develop and analyze instruments by engaging in such activities as item analysis, developing Likert and Thurstone type scales, and factor analysis. The course also includes other material on computer use in a mental health center and other human services agencies for other functions than manipulating statistical data, and how to set up a computer system, including what hardware and software might be needed and where to get it.

INTERNSHIPS

In the fall quarter of their second year students go into an internship in program evaluation. As noted previously, FSU has found that the best learning occurs in internships in which there is a well established program evaluation unit directed by an experienced evaluator.

As the program has become known, there has been no shortage of offers for internships. Some of these internships have included stipends to students during their period of work, and, other things being equal, these are being given preference. Because FSU is in an area with a population of about 150,000 people, and because there are not enough internship opportunities in Tallahassee, students are placed at various other sites in Florida, such as West Palm Beach, Tampa, and Pensacola.

Three criteria have been found useful in selecting sites for internships. First, the setting must provide a complete exposure to all mental health services. All of these do not have to be located in the host agency, but must be nearby. Second, the agency must have been in operation for a sufficiently long time to have worked out any problems relating to its operation. Third, there should have been a professional evaluator on the staff for at least a year before the students are introduced. All placements utilized by the time of this writing had met these criteria and, in fact, had had program evaluation units in place more than three years.

In line with the philosophy that training should be interdisciplinary, arrangements have been made for dual supervision of students in each setting. In most cases, a psychologist with a doctoral degree has provided technical supervision of the students' work in program evaluation while a master's level social worker has helped the students with the values and ethics of the social work profession, serving as another person on whom the intern can depend to help solve problems. In no cases has the dual supervision caused any problems, and in every instance it has been found to be helpful.

Prior to placing students, each intern setting is provided with an outline of courses students have taken, a statement of the knowledge and skills the student is expected to have at the end of the placement and the kinds of experience he or she should have. Vicarious as well as direct learning experiences are used. A statement of expectations of the technical supervisor and of the social work field instructor are also provided. All of this material is made available for students.

A faculty member visits each internship periodically with frequency of visits depending on how long the internship has been established, but at least twice each quarter. He or she is to serve as a liaison (a statement of expectations of this person is also provided to the agency). This system is essentially preventive in nature, and as experience has been gained there appears to be less need for this type of help. In addition to the presence of a faculty liaison, each student is authorized to telephone the program director about problems encountered.

Following their specialized internship in program evaluation, students complete 10 quarter hours of courses related to administration, and six quarter hours of electives. The latter have sometimes been used to gain more knowledge about a substantive social work area, but more often have been used for specialized technical courses relating to pro-

gram evaluation, such as advanced statistics, computer programming, and scaling. Many of these courses have been in departments or schools other than social work.

The required ten quarter hours are:

Exhibit 5

Post-Internship Course Requirements

Course No.	Quarter Hours	
SOW 5172	4	Organizational Behavior
SOW 5253	3	Theory and Practice in Social Service Planning
SOW 5384	3	Integrative Seminar in Social Administration
	10 quarter hours - Total	

Students in the four quarter program (students with certain backgrounds can finish in four quarters) have an additional quarter in the spring. No specific classroom courses are required and students use this period to follow their own interests. Often they elect an extended part-time internship where they work on analysis of data and on writing reports.

EVALUATION

By the end of the first five years 50 students had been graduated. Twelve students were in their second year in the program.

The evaluation of the program's success is only partly shown by the graduation of students. Two other criteria have been used. One is a program monitoring activity and the other a follow-up of graduates.

The authors have developed a test referred to as the KOPE, Knowledge of Program Evaluation, that appears to measure what students have learned in the program and to have some validity in terms of responses of experienced program evaluators. KOPE has been used as a pre- and post-test for students in each of the program's five years. In every case change in scores for students in program evaluation was greater than those for students either in administration or direct service specializations. This test has been partially validated by having a group of experienced evaluators in various parts of the country, a volunteer sample, complete it. This group, numbering 61, has education ranging from a bachelors to a PhD level and varied experience in evaluation. The higher score of the experienced evaluators, as compared to FSU graduates, would appear to be at least some validation of this test.

A follow-up of graduates after they had been on the job several months revealed that more than half were in positions in which they were spending more than half of their time as evaluators. Thirty-five percent of the first group of graduates, 75 percent of the second group, and 100 percent of the third graduating group reported that they were in essentially evaluative positions. Graduates reported that the most helpful part of their training was the internship experience.

8

TESTING INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN NEWLY GRADUATED PRACTITIONERS: A FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Rosalie A. Kane

During the two academic years between 1975 and 1977, the author worked with 26 University of Utah second year social work students with the objective of helping them develop the skill and motivation to submit their research findings to professional journals for possible publication. In the summer of 1978, these students were surveyed in comparison to a randomly selected group of 26 of their classmates who had received a more traditional approach to research instruction. This paper describes the way the respondents -- either one or two years out of their MSW programs -- were utilizing research in their own practice, and presents data to describe the relationship between early efforts at publication and later attitudes about research and research activities.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

In the fall of 1975 the author served as research advisor to 13 students engaged in six separate research projects. These students were encouraged and agreed to work toward preparation of their research in a form acceptable for a professional journal and to actually make a submission of a manuscript. In the following academic year, the author worked with another group of 13 students, this time with nine separate projects, toward the publication objective. The rationale for this approach was that an accepted manuscript would serve as a positive reinforcement for utilizing research later in practice. It was further speculated that the conceptual and practical tasks associated with preparing a viable manuscript would be conducive to stimulating an interest in research and a realistic view of the research process. For this reason it was believed that even those students whose

manuscripts were rejected might emerge from the experience with positive attitudes toward research compared with those who never made an attempt.

In order to assist students conducting research with the goal of eventual publication, a model for instruction was developed with distinctive features of both content and style. This model has been described in detail elsewhere[1] and can only be summarized here. Essentially, the instructor adopted a collegial stance, sharing background knowledge with the student, and seeking new information together with the student when analysis required venturing into new statistical waters. Students were assisted in conceptualizing a potential audience for their work and, in so doing, familiarized themselves with periodical vehicles in their area of interest. Scientific rigor in matters such as sample selection or response rates became crucial because students were aware that their work would be subject to scholarly peer review. In the skill area, specific abilities not always encouraged in traditional thesis-writing included summarizing an extensive literature review in a few succinct pages, organizing an article to display a central theme, developing optimal tabular displays and, through rewriting, producing a short, readable text. Throughout the process, optimistic attitudes were encouraged and contingency plans made for revisions and new targets should the first submission be rejected.

During both years the vast majority of students selected topics of personal interest because of relevance to their practice. They were encouraged to do so, and also to ensure that they were not conducting a redundant study but were actually proposing research which could reasonably add to knowledge. Table 1 describes the groupings of participants during the two years and reports the outcomes of their manuscripts. As indicated, the record of the students in transforming a researchable idea into a completed work reaching a national audience was impressive. Each year five students or groups of students were successful in this pursuit. The record in 1975-76 is stronger in terms of the ratio of submissions and publications to projects. This is possibly explained by the fact that the workload of nine projects made it difficult for the instructor to offer the individualized tutorial assistance inherent in the approach.

Students who achieved publication while on campus received immediate reinforcement from their peers and from official recognition during graduation ceremonies. Most students, of course, did not receive word about the fate of their manuscripts until the year following graduation. Some manuscripts succeeded on a second submission, delaying gratification even further. For some such students, however, other more immediate recognition occurred in the campus and local press.

FOLLOW-UP STUDY

One year after the second group of 13 students graduated, a follow-up study was implemented to determine as much as possible whether contribution

Table 1

Description of Project Participants and Outcomes of Submitted Manuscripts (as of 6/1/79)

	1975/1976	1976/1977
Participants	13 students & 6 projects	13 students & 9 projects
Submissions	7 manuscripts 1 abstract for national meeting	6 manuscripts 1 abstract for national meeting
Publication	6 papers in national journals (2 from 1 project) 1 paper rejected 1 abstract rejected	3 papers in national journals 1 paper accepted pending revisions 1 paper presented at national meeting 1 manuscript rejected 1 manuscript pending

to the literature had any carry-over effects after graduation upon the utilization of research in practice.

Fifty-two graduates received follow-up questionnaires. Included in the study were the 26 former students involved in the research for publication approach (hereafter called the publication group) and a randomly selected comparison group of 26 of their classmates, 13 from each of the two academic years.

A questionnaire was sent to each respondent in July 1978 so that half the sample had been in practice a little over a year and the rest a little over two years at the time of the survey. Addresses were culled from the alumni files and the cover letter, signed by the dean of the school of social work, indicated that the purpose of the survey was to determine the research needs of a group of recent graduates and the extent to which their curriculum had addressed those needs. It was hoped that the respondents would not identify the research utilization questionnaire with any particular research instructor's approach.

The three-page instrument collected information about the respondent's particular research program in graduate school, his or her present employment setting and practice modalities, and the perceived need for research in that setting. Other questions addressed perceived competence in various research tasks, the extent of their utilization of research literature,

and their present research activities or professional writing. Current information was also sought regarding any publications or national presentations emerging from the MSW thesis and any ongoing work on that topic. A final open-ended question probed respondents' retrospective views about the entire MSW research curriculum and its relevance for practice.

The study cannot be considered an experiment since the "publication" group was not selected in a random fashion. Although each year some students were assigned to work with the author as part of their total scheduling, others may have selected this advisor because of a prior interest in research or publication. In the second year in particular, a number of students requested specific help in preparing a manuscript for submission. Random assignment into sections would have been impossible in the climate of the school, although it might have been possible to circulate a sign-up sheet to determine those interested in writing for publication and randomly to select from that roster, using the others as a control group. Now that the innovation is more fully developed, it would be possible to attempt a more rigorous evaluation procedure along those lines but, even then, complete randomization would be difficult because students often form working groups which must be assigned intact to the same instructor. In any event, it seemed worthwhile to conduct an immediate follow-up using the most reasonable control group possible.

Findings

Returns from the survey were gratifying. After the second contact 44 of the 52 questionnaires were returned. Twenty-two responses were received from each of the experimental and control groups for an 85 percent response rate. One questionnaire from each group was returned by the post office, leaving only six who presumably had received the questionnaire and failed to respond. One nonrespondent from the publication group (an individual who published as a student and became employed in an innovative role as a direct result of presenting her findings to a group of physicians) has been in touch with the author, and it is known that she has been conducting painstaking data-collection within her practice with the goal of continued writing.

MSW RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

The comparison group was distributed across the various patterns of research accepted by the school; eight had written a formal thesis, seven a formal research report, two a research paper, five had enrolled in a research laboratory, and two had developed some other combination of classwork and practical experience. The publication group all wrote a research paper although some also submitted that paper to the University as a thesis. The breakdown between solo and group research was the same for both groups.

As Table 2 shows, the publication group members were much more likely to have submitted manuscripts and to have had publications accepted based on their MSW research. The category of presentation at a meeting was misleading since some respondents interpreted this category to include agency presentations while others probably did not. For this reason it is even more remarkable that more than half of the comparison group reported none of the three experiences compared to only one from the experimental group.

Table 2

Outcomes of MSW Research

Outcome	Number of Respondents: Publication Group	Number of Respondents: Comparison Group
Submitted manuscript	17	2
Manuscript accepted	15	1
Conducted further research on same topic	3	5
Presented at meeting	5	7
None of the above	1	12

The perceptions of the two groups about their competencies are not markedly different. Table 3 indicates the perceived competence of the respondents in conducting or interpreting research, and Table 4 indicates their perceived competence in some selected research activities. More noteworthy than any distinctions between the two groups is the fact that many respondents perceived gaps in their abilities, especially in the area of statistical analysis.

Despite the fact that the majority of respondents perceived their research competencies as slight, members of the nonpublication group were much less likely to believe that the MSW curriculum should have given greater emphasis to research. Table 5 shows how respondents reacted to a question about the extent of the research emphasis during their MSW program. The discrepancy may be a function of the greater interest in research on the part of the publication group prior to the MSW program.

Table 3

Perceived Competence to Conduct or Interpret Research

Perceived Competence Level	Number of Respondents			
	Publication Group		Comparison Group	
	Conduct Research	Interpret Research	Conduct Research	Interpret Research
None	2	2	3	1
Slight	6	3	5	7
Moderate	10	13	12	12
Great	4	4	2	2
Total	22	22	22	22

Table 4

Perceived Competence in Selected Research Tasks

Perceived Level of Competence	Number of Respondents					
	Publication Group			Comparison Group*		
	Overall Design	Statistics	Tables/ Graphs	Overall Design	Statistics	Tables/ Graphs
None	0	1	0	1	2	0
Slight	0	11	3	2	8	3
Moderate	16	7	13	14	7	12
Great	6	3	6	3	2	5
Total	22	22	22	20	20	20

* N for this question is only 20 since two comparison group members omitted answers.

Table 5

Perceptions of the MSW Research Emphasis

Respondent Perception	Publication		Non-Publication	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Too much research	0		3	14
About the right amount	11	50	15	68
Not enough research	11	50	4	18

POST-MSW RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

An effort was made to determine how much the respondents utilized the research literature. This issue was approached through a two-part question eliciting information about (1) frequency of professional journal reading and (2) frequency of reading research articles in professional journals. About 50 percent of both groups chose "never" or "occasionally" to describe their general reading frequency while the remainder chose "often" or "fairly often." Table 6 shows the estimated proportion of research articles read by both infrequent and more frequent journal readers. Although the publication group read more research-based articles than the comparison group, the differences are slight and neither group contained many who consulted research literature frequently.

On the other hand, most of the group reported that they were involved in some way in planning research, conducting research, or at least arranging for program evaluation. Table 7 shows the extent of research involvement by the respondents. Definitions were not provided for these terms so that only the open-ended comments (reported below) indicate the extent and nature of the various research involvements.

The publication group members more often reported that they were engaged in actual research -- twice as many reported "conducting research," for example -- although about half of both groups of recent graduates found themselves with responsibility for arranging program evaluation. New graduates in both groups were rather quickly engaging in activities that required some competence in research.

Kinds of Research

Although both publication and comparison group members reported substantial research activity as shown in Table 7, quantitative and qualitative

Table 6

Respondents' Reports of Professional and Research Reading

Percent of Research Articles Read in Professional Journals / Frequency of Professional Reading	Less Frequent*		More Frequent**	
	Publication Group (N=12)	Comparison Group (N=14)	Publication Group (N=10)	Comparison Group (N=8)
0-10%	3	7	0	1
10-25%	3	5	2	2
25-50%	5	2	6	2
50-75%	1	0	2	1
75+%	0	0	0	2

* Respondents who indicated they "never" or "occasionally" read professional journals.

** Respondents who indicated they "fairly often" or "often" read professional journals.

Table 7

Respondents' Reports of Research Activities Since Graduation

Research Involvement	Number Indicating Participation in Activity	
	Publication Group	Comparison Group
Planning Research	11	8
Conducting Research	12	6
Arranging Program Evaluation	12	10
None of Above Activities	5	9

differences were found in the nature of the research activities of the two groups. Those who answered affirmatively to any of the three research activities were asked to describe these activities. Members of the publication group more frequently indicated simultaneous work in three or four areas of research. In contrast, comparison group members more often gave no details other than to indicate that they were arranging program evaluation. When details were supplied, their perceptions of research often turned out to be collection of routine agency statistics. In the comparison group, one respondent was a definite exception to this tendency; he had submitted an article based on his MSW research and presented his findings at a national meeting. This individual's continued involvement in research activity supports the contention that early experience in doing publishable research as an MSW student sets the stage for research in practice.

The variation of research-related tasks and topics reported by the publication group was illuminating. Although they defy easy classification, most of the activities fall under the rubric of program evaluation. Several follow-up studies were reported; for example, one worker at a University Women's Resource Program was following up non-traditional scholarship applicants and another was following up the psychiatric status of child abuse and neglect cases treated at an outpatient clinic. Some were involved in before-after studies (for example, a study of the self-concepts of emotionally disturbed children before and after treatment). Needs assessments were frequently mentioned; three of the publication group members specifically indicated that they were conducting surveys of the needs of special populations (namely, patients of the state's cystic fibrosis clinics, members of the hemophilia association, and Utah community residents over age 60). Others were involved in studying ques-

tions more akin to basic research (for example, one worker was participating on a multidisciplinary research team studying parent-infant bonding and one was studying "alternative life-styles"). One respondent was part of a research team that was conducting a controlled clinical experiment on the effects of psychoactive drugs among alcohol and drug abuse patients. One recent graduate was sitting on the Title XX advisory board and, in that capacity, reviewed data on the effectiveness of all programs to make budget allocation decisions. Three were in the process of writing grants that involved an evaluation design. One of these, employed in a college counseling center, was actually writing a grant that sought funds to train women and minorities in research skills. Undoubtedly these respondents, two years or less out of graduate school, had occasion to use research methods.

Reaction to Rejection

The reaction of members of the publication group to the disappointment of having a manuscript rejected was encouraging. The follow-up showed that those whose manuscripts were rejected were just as likely to be engaging in research as their more fortunate published counterparts. For example, one respondent in the publication group indicated that his manuscript was rejected twice, yet he is currently involved in extensive research. In the open-ended comments, this individual stated, "I used my MSW thesis as a springboard to study an area that interested me" and indicated that the research aided his present practice. Similarly, another whose manuscript was twice rejected is still doing research. Her open-ended response showed a good-humored approach to the setbacks; she noted that the manuscript was rejected because "the hypothesis was thin. To my knowledge there wasn't any hypothesis."

General Respondent Comments

At the end of the questionnaire, a final item requested additional comments about the research curriculum and its relevance to practice. Of the 44 respondents, 35 made such comments, many of them lengthy and thoughtful. The tone of the comments differed markedly in the two groups.

The members of the publication group made observations about the importance of research. For example:

> My research paper provided me with first-hand experience at designing, gathering, and interpreting data which has proven to be of tremendous help in my work now. I am seriously thinking of taking additional classes...in statistics and computer science since I feel it imperative for my career development.

> My need for additional information in tight scientific research design is perhaps increased because of my practice setting -- i.e., academic medicine -- with its emphasis on "pure scientific research"

which has little tolerance for social work inexactitude.

> I felt (on graduation) that I had learned all I needed to enter social work practice but have since found that I lack much knowledge of the research process.

One student who indicated that she had not done research since graduation still commented very positively on the relevance of the MSW research project:

> My research was one of the most beneficial parts of my MSW program. I used an open-ended questionnaire. While developing it, I learned a real basic skill of social work -- how to get opinions and information from people without influencing what they will say. Many of the techniques I used in interviewing I now use while doing therapy with clients.

In the comparison group, far less enthusiasm for the utility of research in practice was expressed. One comparison group member did indeed make the statement that research should be stressed to a greater degree rather than devalued in the profession because "we need to develop thinkers as well as feelers." This individual, again, was the one comparison group member who had contributed to the literature with his MSW research. More typical responses were the following:

> At the agency there is a research department who will research anything desired. They have the expertise and the desire.

> I am not a researcher. I am a social worker who enjoys some knowledge of what valid research is. If I wanted to be a researcher, I would have majored in research. If I want research done, I'll find someone who is well skilled or why bother.

> My experience with the research lab and the subsequent writing of a major paper (not thesis or research type) seemed quite adequate. As an MSW practicing in the field of mental health, I find that serious research is usually done by specialists in the field.

Both groups had criticism of the research curriculum of the MSW program. Specific suggestions included better integration of research into the total curriculum and more emphasis on teaching how to interpret research. A publication group member pointed out that "few of my classes made use of current research" while a comparison group member who felt that the research curriculum "did not pertain whatsoever" stated that it would have been "very useful if an instructor would merely take Social Work and review articles in terms of their statistical analysis." Another comparison group member found too much emphasis on English composition within the research program, "thus encouraging plagiarism rather

than creativity."

A publication group member, actively engaged in research in practice, felt more political awareness needed to be built into the research program:

> Too much emphasis was placed on textbook research and statistics. Unless you work in a higher education setting, such curriculum is worthless. Research presentation, political involvement, program evaluation and assessment, and so on are the things I've encountered in a "real" public agency.... An MSW in a public agency has to be a salesman. What he puts together must come across or he might as well be a farmer.

Several in the comparison group indicated that they felt unprepared for the research needs of the agencies. One student who now needs to implement cost-effectiveness in a rehabilitation program felt unprepared for the task. A more common comparison group reaction, however, was disinterest in research. Four stated in their comments that research should not be a requirement:

> Few students have enough experience and wisdom while in school to write meaningful research that is original and creative. Those who do are discouraged from doing so.

> If research is so important to the discipline, present it in motivating ways so as to intrigue the students. Don't waste time teaching research to everyone; be selective so as to teach those who are interested. Then I believe the research will be of higher quality and a credit to the field of social work, and not just another paper to complete for graduation.

Almost as if in answer to the above comments, many of the publication group members wrote directly about the impact of writing for publication as a motivating force:

> (The research program) stimulated me to consider attempting research and writing for publication. I still retain this interest.

> (The research program) was helpful in giving research a realistic feeling for worth and use in practice. Research is not so ominous sounding, and I find it exciting to use and do research.

> Just having a paper accepted for publication has made me more alert to possible publishable topics, and more willing to try out new techniques that I read about than I might have been. School social workers, on the whole, seem indifferent to developing new techniques and sharing them through professional literature.

SUMMARY

Over the course of two academic years, the author worked with 26 students toward the goal of eventual publication based on their MSW research. A substantial number of the students submitted manuscripts or abstracts to national meetings and the majority of those making submissions had their work accepted. A poll of a random sample of their classmates indicated two individuals who had submitted a manuscript, one of which had been accepted. A comparison of the two groups showed that, although members of both groups found some need for research in practice, the publication group was utilizing research more extensively, and also endorsed a more detailed research curriculum for the MSW program than did the comparison group. In open-ended comments, positive reactions to the importance of research for the practitioner and the stimulating nature of the MSW research curriculum predominated in the publication group, whereas negative comments predominated in the comparison group. The self-perceptions of the two groups regarding their own research abilities was very similar.

In all likelihood, an interest in research generates an appreciation of the need for research in practice. This might account for the fact that more of those who published in the MSW program found themselves in practice positions where they perceived the need for research knowledge. The practice positions may have been similar, but the perceptions different. It is striking that, of 44 recent MSW graduates, all but nine found themselves involved in planning or conducting research or arranging for program evaluation. The follow-up of the research-for-publication approach suggests that a focus on publication in the MSW program may prepare students to embark more enthusiastically and wholeheartedly into utilizing research in their careers. Even though recognizing that a controlled experiment has not yet been undertaken to test the hypothesis that attempting to publish research results while in graduate school is associated with more and better utilization of research in practice, some preliminary information has been presented which supports further exploration of that idea. Those students who wrote for publication while in graduate school tend to believe retrospectively that their research was "real" and "relevant," high praise from students of the 1970s.

NOTES

Introduction

1. Allen Rubin and Aaron Rosenblatt, Sourcebook on Research Utilization (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1979).

2. For an analysis of the common themes and issues in some of these papers, as well as their disparate methods and philosophies, see Robert Weinbach, "A Look at Variations in Social Work Research Education," to appear in the third and final volume of this project, which will be edited by Scott Briar, Harold Weissman, and Allen Rubin and will be published by the Council on Social Work Education.

Chapter 1

1. Scott Briar, "Effective Social Work Intervention in Direct Practice: Implications for Education," Facing the Challenge, ed. Scott Briar, William B. Cannon, Leon H. Ginsberg, Stephen Horn, and Rosemary Sarri, (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1973), pp. 17-30.

2. Joel Fischer, "Is Casework Effective: A Review," Social Work, Vol. 18 No. 1 (January 1973), pp. 5-21.

3. Cheryl Richey, "The Integrated Educational Unit: An Approach to Combining Methods, Research, and Field Instruction," presented at the Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education, Phoenix, Arizona, March 1977.

Chapter 2

1. Scott Briar, "Incorporating Research into Education for Clinical Practice in Social Work: Toward a Clinical Science in Social Work" in Sourcebook on Research Utilization, eds. A. Rubin and A. Rosenblatt (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1979).

2. Primarily referred to here is social work direct practice. The same state of affairs may or may not apply to the "indirect" or macro-practice methods.

3. The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, College Ed., (New York: Random House, 1968) notes that the terms "theory" (and) hypothesis are both often used colloquially to mean an untested idea or opinion. A theory properly is a more or less verified or established explanation accounting for known facts or phenomena: the theory of relativity. A hypothesis is a conjecture put forth as a possible explanation of certain phenomena or relations, and serves as a basis of argument or experimentation by which to reach the truth..."

4. A. Kadushin, "The Knowledge Base of Social Work" in Issues in American Social Work, ed. A. Kahn (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

5. E. Greenwood, "Attributes of a Profession," Social Work, Vol. 2 (July 1957), pp. 45-55.

6. A. Kahn, "The Nature of Social Work Knowledge" in New Directions in Social Work, ed. C. Kasius (New York: Harper and Row, 1954).

7. Ibid.

8. K. Wood, "Casework Effectiveness: A New Look at the Research Evidence," Social Work, Vol. 23 (November 1978), pp. 437-459; J. Fischer, "Is Casework Effective? A Review," Social Work, Vol. 18 (January 1973), pp. 5-21.

9. A. Rosenblatt, "The Practitioner's Use and Evaluation of Research," Social Work, Vol. 13 (1968), p. 1; S. Kirk, M. Osmalov and J. Fischer, "Social Workers' Involvement in Research," Social Work, Vol. 21 (March 1976), pp. 121-24; and B. Casselman, "On the Practitioner's Orientation Toward Research," Smith College Studies in Social Work, Vol. 42 (1972).

10. Ms. Virginia Klein (now PhD).

11. J. Rothman, "Gaps and Linkages in Research Utilization: Enhancing Utilization Through a Research and Development Approach" in Rubin and Rosenblatt, op. cit.

12. Ms. Donna Derr; this description is based in part on her draft manuscript concerning the course.

13. M. Dinerman, E. Schlesinger and K. Wood, "A Framework for the Evolving Role of Social Work Practice in Health Care" (paper presented at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, Social Work Section, Los Angeles, Calif., October 1978).

Chapter 3

1. Aaron Rosenblatt, "The Practitioner's Use and Evaluation of Research," Social Work, Vol. 13 (January 1968), pp. 53-59; and B. Casselman, "On the Practitioner's Orientation Toward Research," Smith College Studies in Social Work, Vol. 42 (1972), pp. 211-233.

2. Stuart Kirk, M.J. Osmalov and Joel Fischer, "Social Workers' Involvement in Research," Social Work, Vol. 21 (March 1976), pp. 121-124.

3. J.W. Eaton, "Symbolic and Substantive Evaluation Research," Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 6 (1962), pp. 421-442; Rosenblatt, op. cit.; Casselman, op. cit.; and Kirk, Osmalov and Fischer, op. cit.

4. Stuart Kirk and Joel Fischer, "Do Social Workers Understand Research?" Journal of Education for Social Work, Vol. 12 (Winter 1976), pp. 63-67.

5. Sidney E. Zimbalist, "The Research Component of the Master's Degree Curriculum in Social Work: A Survey Summary," Journal of Education for Social Work, Vol. 10 (1974), pp. 118-123; and Allen Rubin and Sidney E. Zimbalist, "Trends in the MSW Research Curriculum: A Decade Later," (mimeographed, New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1979).

6. "Report from the Commission on Accreditation," Social Work Education Reporter, Vol. 16 (1968).

7. Joel Fischer, Effective Casework Practice: An Eclectic Approach (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978).

8. Stuart Kirk and Aaron Rosenblatt, "Barriers to Students' Utilization of Research," (paper presented at the Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education, Phoenix, Arizona, March 1977); J.L. Bushnell and G.M. O'Brien, "Strategies and Tactics for Increasing Research Production and Utilization in Social Work Education," in Sourcebook on Research Utilization, eds. Allen Rubin and Aaron Rosenblatt (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1979), pp. 169-188.

9. Walter H. Hudson, "Research Training in Professional Social Work Education: Issues and Problems," Social Service Review, Vol. 52 (March 1978), pp. 116-121.

10. "Report from the Commission on Accreditation," op. cit.

11. Hudson, op. cit.

12. Hudson, op. cit.

13. P. Weed and S.R. Greenwald, "The Mystics of Statistics," Social Work, Vol. 18 (March 1973), pp. 113-115.

14. M. Hersen and D. Barlow, Single Case Experimental Design (New York: Pergamon, 1976); and Fischer, op. cit.

15. For some exceptions, see H.K. Goldstein, Maximizing Research Learning for Three Types of Social Work Students (Tallahassee, Florida: Florida State University, 1972); H.K. Goldstein, Evaluating Optimum Conditions for Learning in the Research Experience of Social Work Students (Tallahassee, Florida: Florida State University, 1977); and F.W. Seidl, "Teaching Social Work Research: A Study in Teaching Method," Journal of Education for Social Work, Vol. 9 (Fall 1973), pp. 71-77.

16. Kirk and Rosenblatt, op. cit.

Chapter 4

1. Much of the material presented in this chapter is based on a research utilization project conducted at the School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, funded by the Ittleson Foundation, Inc. The contributions of the project staff, Werner Harder, Anne Kincaid, Nancy Kyte, Paul Sorrentino, Susan Stern, and students at Fordham University, Case Western Reserve University, and the University of Chicago are acknowledged.

2. Harris Goldstein, "Identifying and Maximizing Research Learning Potential for Social Work Students" (Tulane: Tulane Studies in Social Welfare, 1967), pp. 37-40, 85; Stuart A. Kirk and Michael S. Kolevzon, "Teaching Research Methodology from Z to A," Journal of Education for Social Work, Vol. 14 (Winter 1978), pp. 66-72.

3. Stuart A. Kirk, Michael J. Osmalov, and Joel Fischer, "Social Workers' Involvement in Research," Social Work, Vol. 21 (March 1976), pp. 121-125; Aaron Rosenblatt, "The Practitioner's Use and Evaluation of Research," Social Work, Vol. 13 (January 1968), pp. 53-59.

4. Goldstein, op. cit.

5. Donald E. Chambers, "The Trouble with Secrets: A Radical Revision of the Teaching of Research in the Social Work Curriculum," Arete, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Spring 1976), p. 4.

6. "Component" is a general term which refers to both intervention qualities and intervention techniques. Examples of an intervention quality would be intervenor empathy, client level of functioning, or intervenor-client compatibility.

7. For an elaboration of this research utilization process, see Edward J. Mullen, "The Construction of Personal Models for Effective Practice: A Method for Utilizing Research Findings to Guide Social Interventions," Journal of Social Service Research (in press).

8. These categories were derived from a review of the evaluation research literature. They were developed in an attempt to encompass most of the intervention process factors that both directly and indirectly influence outcome with individuals, couples, families, and small groups.

9. When the demographic characteristics (e.g., sex, age, race) were compared with those of the general School of Social Service Administration student body, no significant differences were found.

10. Since two-thirds of the respondents were still students at the time this information was gathered, it is important to keep in mind that the research utilization practices described may not necessarily represent practices subsequent to graduation.

11. Information on research utilization practices was obtained by incorporating relevant sections of the Council on Social Work Education "Research Utilization Project Questionnaire." Comparative data on these questions may be available from the Council on Social Work Education.

12. If a student reported that a particular component was included in his or her model, he or she was then asked to provide an emphasis rating. This rating was based on a four-point scale ranging from 1 ("minor model emphasis") to 4 ("total model emphasis"). The latter rating should not be interpreted as implying that a particular quality or technique was the only one included in the model. Rather, it should be interpreted as a component that was stressed with all clients.

13. These data do not indicate the extent to which an individual student incorporated each component in his or her model. Rather, they only indicate the actual number of students who included a particular component.

14. A possible ceiling effect may have influenced some of these results. That is, if the preponderance of students incorporated a particular component prior to the course, this would preclude any substantial (positive) attitudinal shift upon completion of the course. Such an effect may have been operating with intervenor qualities and, to a lesser extent, with the intervenor-client interaction and client quality components.

Chapter 5

1. Paul K.H. Kim, "Research Way to the Remedy for a Professional Dilemma in Social Work," Arete, Vol. 4 (Spring 1977), p. 142.

2. Ibid., p. 148.

3. University of South Carolina, Graduate School of Social Work, "Application for Admission to Candidacy for Accreditation," submitted to the Council on Social Work Education, April 1, 1969, p. 88.

4. University of South Carolina, Graduate School of Social Work, "Report for Accreditation Review," submitted to the Council on Social Work Education, November 1, 1973, pp. 18-20.

5. See, e.g., Burton Gummer, "Social Planning and Social Administration: Implications for Curriculum Development," in Social Administration, ed., Simon Slavin (New York: Haworth Press and Council on Social Work Education, 1978), pp. 14-24.

6. See, e.g., Scott Briar, "The Age of Accountability," Editorial Page, Social Work, Vol. 18 (January 1973), pp. 2, 14.

7. Robert W. Weinbach, "Dissemination and Utilization of Student Research," Journal of Education for Social Work, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Spring 1979).

8. Stuart Kirk and Aaron Rosenblatt, "The Kirk-Rosenblatt Research Inventory," data collection instrument developed for use by the Advisory Committee on Research Utilization in Social Work Education of the Council on Social Work Education, 1977, unpublished.

9. Stuart Kirk, Joel Fischer and Robert Weinbach, "Changes in Graduate Social Work Students' Research Knowledge and Attitudes During an Academic Year," 1979, unpublished manuscript.

Chapter 6

1. Bulletin of the School of Social Work, Howard University, 1978.

Chapter 7

1. This program is partially supported by an experimental training grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, 2T21 MH 3748.

2. These areas follow the order in the "Final Report of the First Three Years, 1974-1977," Harris K. Goldstein, School of Social Work, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida.

3. Eleven of these hours are required for all students, regardless of specialization: SOW 5404, 5415, and 5435.

4. Students have the option of taking a policy course, SOW 5233, the first quarter and SOW 5404, Research, in the second quarter, but this option is not open to program evaluation students.

Chapter 8

1. Rosalie A. Kane, "Encouraging MSW Students to Write for Publication: A Realistic Goal of the Research Curriculum," Journal of Education for Social Work, Vol. 14 (Fall 1978), pp. 78-85.